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# MEDFORD HISTORICAL REGISTER

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VOL. XVII., 1914

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JANUARY, 1914

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ST. JOSEPH'S ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND PAROCHIAL RESIDENCE.

# The Medford Historical Register.

VOL. XVII. JANUARY, 1914. No. 1.

## THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN MEDFORD.

BY LOUISE F. HUNT.

[Read before the Medford Historical Society, November 18, 1912.]

I WAS asked by the Medford Historical Society to write this sketch, as our church in Medford is not recorded in their archives. I found the task of giving a correct statement hedged about with many difficulties, owing to the fact that in the earlier times but few records were kept, and the men and women who began the movement sixty-three years ago have passed away, but I have tried my best.

It will not be unprofitable to compare the numerical strength of the Catholics in the diocese at the time of the establishment of this parish with that at the present time. In 1856 the number of priests laboring in the diocese of Boston was sixty-five, forty-eight in the territory now included in said diocese, and seventeen in what are now the dioceses of Springfield and Fall River. There are now over six hundred priests laboring in this diocese, and four hundred and twenty-two in the dioceses of Springfield and Fall River, while the Catholic population of the archdiocese is nearly one million, and of the remainder of the State about five hundred thousand.

The awful famine which prevailed in Ireland about 1840 drove many of the inhabitants, with their families, to seek a living across the seas. A goodly number settled in Boston, and a few drifted to Medford in the ship-building industry. These stalwart pioneers had held tenaciously to the faith of their fathers, and had been going to Boston to worship in the Moon street church, to Charlestown, to South Boston, and then to North Cambridge, where the Rev. Manasses Doherty officiated in St. Peter's Church.

But in 1849 they felt that they were numerous enough to call for the occasional visit of a priest to minister to them in Medford, so they chose a committee, who waited upon the selectmen of the town, stated their object, and asked that they be allowed the use of the Town Hall for the celebration of the Mass. At first some objection was made, but when the selectmen realized how much in earnest the petitioners were, they granted the request, only stipulating that the janitor's services should be paid for. Father Doherty of North Cambridge then came to Medford once a month to offer up the Mass in the Town Hall, first hearing confessions in the old Wade house on High street (where Small's block now stands), in a room occupied by Mr. Daniel Vaughan. Soon after, in 1852, as children came, the need was felt of a Sunday School to teach the catechism, and an appeal was made to the school board. The appeal was heard, and the room set aside for tramps in the basement of the High School building was appointed for the purpose. Here a class was organized by Father Doherty, the teachers being the men and women of the congregation.

All the territory north of Charlestown and Cambridge was then without the services of a priest, and on the Sundays between the monthly visits of Father Doherty the faithful trudged on foot to Charlestown and back, rather than to be without Mass, in that splendid zeal for the faith which is so admirable. A conveyance owned by Constable Butler of Malden made the trip on these Sundays between Malden and Charlestown, but the round fare was forty cents, a prohibitive amount for the greater number of the immigrant settlers, whose pay was small and whose hardships were many.

In one of these journeys they heard that a priest had newly arrived from the English mission. His name was Rev. John Ryan, formerly curate of the Catholic parish of Ashton-under-Lyne, near the city of Manchester. He was for the present the guest of Father Hamilton, pastor of St. Mary's, Charlestown. He had left his English mis-

sion to carry the comforts of religion to the Irish emigrants, thousands of whom had settled in America since the famine. Without delay the leading spirits of that stalwart generation in Medford and Malden met in council and decided to ask the Rt. Rev. Bishop Fitzpatrick to give them Father Ryan. They waited upon Father Hamilton to present their address to the Bishop, which he did, and the request was granted. Father Doherty discontinued his visits to Medford, and in November, 1854, Father Ryan received his appointment to the new parish. It included Malden, Medford, Melrose, South Reading (now Wakefield), Reading, Stoneham and Winchester. The first Mass was said in Greene's Hall, on the corner of Pleasant and Middlesex streets in Malden. It is estimated that more than two hundred Catholics were present on that occasion. Father Ryan called his people together and told them a building was needed at once for a church. It proved to be difficult to buy land. As Malden was more thickly settled than Medford, it was decided to find a site in or near Malden, and at last the lot in Medford near the Malden line, where the Malden convent now stands, was purchased. At about the same time the zealous Catholics of Medford bought a lot in the heart of that town, but it was found that the united strength of both towns was needed, and so that land was sold. An old building stood on the lot finally bought, and it was determined to fit it up as a place of worship, but the alterations were hardly begun when the owner of the land opposite decided to sell, and the parcel was bought where the Church of the Immaculate Conception now stands. The expense of this was great, but greater still was the problem of how and where to get the money to build a church. Yet out of their scanty means and poverty they found a way. A small brick edifice was soon constructed, the parishioners being the builders, and here, on Christmas morning, 1855, the faithful were assembled for the first Mass in the basement chapel of the unfinished church. Their devotion inspired them to

make fitting preparations for the occasion. There were paper flowers on the altar, which several of the women had made for the day's ceremony. Evergreen and spruce trees, which the young men had cut down and drawn from the hill rising just above the church, reached from the floor to the ceiling and were banked on either side of, and behind, the altar. Father Ryan, having just returned from Reading, where he had celebrated Mass, found the faithful of Medford and Malden awaiting him. We may well imagine the joy of those loyal hearts when their first pastor, on that Christmas morning, offered the Holy Sacrifice for the first time, in their first church, for the consolation and the spiritual uplift of the small struggling community.

This was the earliest formal beginning of an organized Catholic society effected in this part of Middlesex County. This same structure is still in use, being a part of the large Church of the Immaculate Conception (then called St. Mary's) which you see today, standing as it does, together with the rectory, on the land provided by those first pioneers.

On April 20, 1877, that part of the town of Medford in which this edifice is located was annexed to the town of Malden by an act of the State Legislature.

In 1873, March 3d, it was voted in town meeting in Medford that "the sum of $600.00 be appropriated for the Clock on the Catholic Church in Salem street, said clock to become the property of the Town, and the Society to keep the same in proper order and insured for the benefit of the Town."

In 1863 Father Ryan died, borne down by the weight of his toil and labor. He was succeeded by the Rev. Thomas Scully, who had been an army chaplain, and while in the South with the Massachusetts soldiers was captured and confined in Libby Prison. This broke down his health, as it did that of so many others, causing him to resign from the army when he was freed. He was assigned to Medford and Malden, where he remained until 1867, then going to Cambridgeport.

Two brief terms of service of the Revs. John McShane and Michael Carroll were followed by the long and notable pastorate of the Rev. Thomas Gleeson, which extended over sixteen years.

Although the Church of St. Mary was in Medford, it was near the boundary of Malden, and was much better adapted to the wants of the Malden people than to those who lived near the center and on the other side of Medford. As the latter town increased in population and wealth, so did the Catholics increase, and they soon began to desire a church to themselves. Meetings were held, and it was decided either to construct or to buy a church building. Finally, on March 24, 1876, the Trinitarian Congregational Church on High street passed into their hands. It received the name of St. Joseph, and since that time the Medford Catholics have had their own place of worship, although in the dividing up of the town a good number of the inhabitants are still included in the parish of old St. Mary's.

Father Gleeson ministered to the wants of both parishes until 1883, when Medford became a separate parish, with its own pastor. The Rev. Richard Donnelly was sent as the first rector. Father Gleeson had greatly endeared himself to the Medford congregation, and deep was the sorrow that was felt when he bade them good-bye. There was not a dry eye in the church, strong men as well as the women weeping with regret.

Father Donnelly succeeded well in his ministrations; his gentle and kindly ways were appreciated by all with whom he came in contact. He bought the residence of Mr. John Ayres (standing on the same site as the present rectory) for the priests' house. But unfortunately his health was delicate, and in 1886 he was called to his reward, most deeply lamented.

A year or so before he died, as his health began to fail most seriously, Archbishop Williams sent an assistant priest to aid him. This priest was the Rev. William H. O'Connell, who had just completed his theological course and had been ordained in Rome. Many of us can recall

the presence of Father O'Connell at that time and must have followed his very remarkable career. He remained but a few months in Medford after Father Donnelly's death, and then was sent as an assistant to St. Joseph's Church in the West End of Boston. After a few years he was chosen to be the rector of the American College of Propaganda in Rome, of which he is an alumnus. While there he was appointed Bishop of Portland, Maine, from which place he was sent on a papal mission to Japan. After his return he was appointed coadjutor to Archbishop Williams of Boston, and at his death succeeded him in the Archbishopric. This office he still holds, with the unique distinction of having been recently raised to the Cardinalate, the first Cardinal ever appointed for New England. His Eminence dedicated our new Catholic Church in Medford last June, and he spoke from the altar most feelingly of his admiration for the saintly character of Father Donnelly, of the privilege it had been to be associated with him, and also most appreciatingly of the kindness he had received from both Catholics and Protestants during the short term of his ministry in Medford.

Father Donnelly was succeeded by the Rev. Michael Gilligan, who labored most earnestly among us for fourteen years. The old church on High street had become inadequate to the needs of the congregation and was falling into decay, so Father Gilligan determined to provide for a new building. He bought property on the river side of High street, belonging to the Gray estate and adjacent to the priests' house. Building was immediately begun, and foundations of the new church were laid. Many problems arose on account of the formation of the ground and the unexpected development of springs of water. But Father Gilligan and his undaunted parishioners were not to be discouraged. The stately and noble church which we now occupy arose, and the congregation moved into the chapel in the basement, finding it most commodious and cheerful. Indeed, it was so much so that Father

Gilligan used to say, "We are so comfortable here I fear it will be difficult to finish the interior of the upper church." Alas! he did not live to see his great work completed, for in 1900 he passed away, after a long and painful illness.

In March, 1900, the Rev. Thomas L. Flanagan came to Medford from the parish of Stoneham, where he had been pastor for some years. He was an intimate friend of Father Gilligan, and he took up the work of completing the new church as Father Gilligan laid it down. And indeed, as we review the twelve years that he has been in Medford, the amount accomplished by his efforts, with the hearty co-operation of the parish, seems quite wonderful. The large debt which he found on the church has been paid off, a handsome and commodious rectory, which is a conspicuous ornament to High street, has been built and is free of debt.

Within the last eighteen months the interior of the upper church has been almost entirely completed. It is really beautiful in its harmony of decoration, its fine stained-glass windows, and in the lofty outlines of its architecture. It is also redolent of the spirit of self-sacrifice and generosity of the people, for the windows, the high altar and the altar to Our Blessed Lady, the pulpit, the candlesticks, the sanctuary lamp, the musical sanctuary chimes, the new golden chalice, the golden communion trays, the stations of the cross, are all donations, the most of them memorial gifts. And it was a happy day when His Eminence the Cardinal came out on Sunday, June 2, 1912, to dedicate the church and its contents to the worship of God.

There are now three priests to minister to the congregation, the Revs. William H. Flynn and Daniel F. Desmond, assisting Father Flanagan. Four successive Masses are celebrated every Sunday morning and are well attended by both men and women. There is a large Sunday School, which meets in the chapel on Sunday afternoons before Vespers, and there are always two, and generally

three Masses said every morning in the week. The parishioners of St. Joseph's number two thousand five hundred, and they are all zealous in their faith and active in good works.

A few years ago the Catholics of West Medford, who were members of St. Joseph's Church, found they had so increased in number as to desire a congregation and Sunday School of their own. So Father Flanagan hired Holton Hall in West Medford for their use, and there served them. But they soon outgrew the hall, and land was bought and a beautiful little chapel was built, the name of St. Raphael being given to it, the Rev. Nathaniel Merritt having been sent to them as pastor. He has since been transferred to Winchester and the Rev. Jeremiah Lyons is now the rector. The congregation has grown from six hundred and fifty to about one thousand, and is most flourishing.

St. Joseph's Church has also contributed its share of parishioners to the new parish of St. Clement, beyond South Medford, which was set apart last spring by His Eminence and placed under the care of the Rev. Thomas McCarthy. It has a membership of two thousand nine hundred. The congregation worshipped all summer in a huge tent, but it is already in its new building, which has been dedicated since this paper was begun.

So the Catholic Church in Medford has increased greatly in numbers, and has adhered most firmly to the faith brought hither by the stalwart and loyal Irish immigrants so many years ago. The spirits of those faithful pioneers must look with loving pride and gratitude upon the result of their labors which have been so blessed of God.

The statistics from which I have compiled this paper were supplied to me by a sketch of the church in Malden, written by Rev. Neil Brennan, a memorandum given by Mr. McGillicuddy and brought to me kindly by Mr. Edward J. Gaffey, and papers kindly lent me by Mrs. M. F. Dwyer from those left by her late husband. The latter part is from my own recollections and dates verified by Rev. Thomas L. Flanagan. L. F. H.

## TOLD ON WINTER HILL.

TO the student of history, as well as to all of patriotic thought, the scenes of the Colonial and Revolutionary Wars have a special interest.

It was with somewhat of patriotic and reverential feeling that the writer strolled along the road from Lake George and past Bloody Pond with his grandson, and told the little boy the story of the old struggle for supremacy in that gateway of the north, and how *his* three times great grandfather had gone over the same route to Fort William Henry, also not omitting the story of Burgoyne's southward march over the same historic ground.

And again, how impressive were the hours spent in the old Marshall house at Schuylerville (the home of a daughter's friend). There the Baroness Reidesel found shelter, descending to the cellar for safety during the cannonade of one of the world's decisive battles.

Then the visit to the Saratoga battle monument, whose lofty shaft fitly commemorates the struggle of an eventful day, will never be forgotten. In enduring bronze on three sides stand the figures of Schuyler, Gates and Morgan, but the empty niche on the fourth speaks eloquently, but sadly, of the one who fought so bravely till wounded. Empty it must ever remain; only the name of Arnold suggests the reason why. Historians accord to Arnold exceptional bravery on that day, and better had it been for him had the enemy's wound been fatal.

Under Arnold's command was an officer whose memory Medford ever delights to honor — John Brooks. Certainly it was with a feeling of satisfaction that we looked across the hills to the scene of the heroic charge, and remembered the part the Medford doctor and the Massachusetts men took therein. Nearly a century ago an episode occurred in Medford that recalled that battle day. It is worthy of record in Medford annals, and we can do no better than to quote it entire, as given by Gen. W. H. Sumner in Massachusetts Historical Collection, Vol. III.

IN the year 1816, General Brooks having been declared governor by the two branches of the Legislature, I was invited out to breakfast with him at Medford on the day fixed for his inauguration. Colonel Hall and one or two others were present. I shall never forget the day, which was one of the pleasantest in June. There was a cavalcade formed in Boston, which proceeded to Medford, under the command of General Sullivan, to escort the popular governor into Boston to the State House, where he was to take the oath of office. The inhabitants of Medford, being desirous of rendering all honor to their beloved townsman, had watered their streets, that there might be no dust, and crowded the windows and tops of the houses to see the cavalcade. They had previously appointed peace officers to serve on the occasion, who stopped all carriages at the ends of the various streets that entered the village, so that the procession should be uninterrupted. It was understood that the escort would arrive at Medford at nine o'clock. We sat down to breakfast at eight. While at our meal General Brooks saw through the window a tall old gentleman, dressed in his Sunday clothes, with a cocked hat and a long cane. He said to Colonel Hall: "Pray look out at the door and see if that is not Captain Bancroft who is passing by. I think it is, and that he is come down to witness the ceremonies of this occasion, and is going by my house, being too modest to present himself. Pray go out and ask him in."

He was right in his conjecture, and Colonel Bancroft (for, after he was discharged from the army, he took command of a regiment of militia, which he held a long time) modestly entered the side door. This was the distinguished officer who commanded a company in the Eighth Regiment, under the command of Colonel Brooks, in the battle of Bemis' Heights, between the armies of Generals Gates and Burgoyne, during the Revolutionary War, on the 7th of October, 1777. After the usual salutations between these two officers, who had so much distinguished themselves on that occasion, General Brooks asked Colonel

Bancroft to take a cup of coffee and remain till the procession came up, and added, "There is no man whom I am more glad to see on this occasion than yourself." To which the other answered (the parties, forgetting their present rank, addressed each other by the titles they held in the Revolutionary army): "There is no one, Colonel Brooks, who rejoices in it more than I do. I breakfasted at Reading, and came down on purpose to witness the ceremonies of this occasion. The choice of a governor which the people have made delights my heart. I can truly say that if you make as good a governor as you did colonel of a regiment, you will render yourself distinguished, and the people will be blessed in your administration." Tears flowed down their cheeks as they clasped each other's hands. To the remarks of Captain Bancroft, Colonel Brooks replied (they still shaking hands heartily), "I thank you, Captain Bancroft, for your kind expressions of confidence. I did not seek the office to which the people have elected me, and I fear I do not possess the qualifications for it; but I can truly say that if, in the office of governor, I have such support as I had as colonel of a regiment in taking Breyman's Fort on Bemis' Heights, I shall hope to do the State some service."

The cavalcade now entered the streets of Medford amid the acclamations of the citizens. General Brooks mounted his charger, and by his request, I rode by his side as volunteer aid. On the way, as we were ascending Winter Hill, General Brooks remarked: "Perhaps you do not know, sir, the reason why the meeting between Captain Bancroft and myself was so affecting. I will explain.

"On the 7th of October, the day of the last battle with General Burgoyne, General Arnold and several officers dined with General Gates. I was among the company, and well remember that one of the dishes was an ox's heart. While at table we heard a firing from the advanced picket. The armies were about two miles from each other. The firing increased. We all rose from the table, and General Arnold, addressing General Gates, said, 'Shall I

go out and see what is the matter?' General Gates made no reply, but, on being pressed, said, 'I am afraid to trust you, Arnold.' To which Arnold answered, 'Pray let me go; I will be careful, and if our advance does not need support I will promise not to commit you.' Gates then told him he might go and see what the firing meant. Arnold lost no time in advancing with his brigade, and finding that the attack was serious, engaged the left of the enemy's right, where, meeting with great obstacles, he ordered me (I was then commanding the Eighth, or Jackson's Regiment, as it was commonly called) to get a position on the enemy's right flank. This was protected by Breyman's Fort, mounting several brass pieces, and was rather a breastwork, or redoubt, with guns mounted on three sides, than a fort. I advanced under cover of the woods, and as the regiment deployed out of them in front of the fort, the enemy, surprised at our sudden appearance, fired a volley of musketry at us. Seeing what they were about to do, as their heads rose above the parapet, the company on the left flank of the regiment, which was most exposed, immediately covered themselves from the discharge by dropping down behind a partridge log. I thought the volley had shot them all down, and rode to them in great haste to ascertain what was the matter. I was greatly agitated, and met Captain Bancroft, who commanded the left wing. He, also, had quit his place to see what disaster had occurred. At this moment the company all rose up and we were relieved from our apprehension. I was still, however, greatly agitated, and speaking sharply to Captain Bancroft I said, 'What business have you here, sir?' The captain said, 'I came to see what had happened to the company on the left.' I said, 'You are out of place, sir.' With the submissive spirit of a good soldier he replied, 'I am ready to obey your orders, Colonel.' With great perturbation I responded, 'My orders are that you advance and enter those lines, sir.' The captain, smarting under the reproof, quickly gave the word, 'Come on, my boys, and enter that fort.' Then,

leading the way himself, he made a rapid movement forward, and his company ascended the parapet. Surprised at the suddenness of the assault, the enemy retired from the fort and the whole regiment entered it.

"General Arnold, whose energy gave spirit to the whole action, having been wounded in the foot, Brigadier-General Learned assumed the command of the brigade.

"As the day was far spent the men threw themselves down to rest, when General Learned called the officers together, and in hearing of the men, said, 'I have called you together, gentlemen, to see whether you agree with me in opinion that it is best to return to our position. I am clearly of opinion that we cannot hold this place till morning; we may all fall a sacrifice in the attempt.' The officers of my regiment were the only ones who dissented from this opinion. I said I thought it was time enough to retreat when the enemy appeared. 'If he does not attempt to retake the fort it will be an everlasting disgrace for us to abandon it; and if he does and we cannot defend it, there will be no dishonor in retreating. At any rate, my men are fatigued, and want rest and refreshment before they can move anywhere.' The soldiers cheered us as we returned from the council.

"Shortly afterwards General Learned (who was a weak man), called another council to advise with the officers again, and as I was going to the meeting my men said, 'For God's sake, Colonel, don't retreat; we have taken the work, and we are able to keep it,' and cheered again. At the second council but one other officer sided with me. Before the council broke up an officer (who turned out to be an aid-de-camp of General Gates) rode up in great speed, and cried out, 'Who commands here?' The answer was, 'Brigadier-General Learned.' As he appeared the officer said, 'My orders from General Gates are that you should retain possession of this fort at all hazards,' and rode back with as much speed as he came up. 'There now, Colonel Brooks,' said General Learned, 'I dare say you like that, and as your regiment had a principal hand

in taking the work, I will commit to them the defence of it.'

"It is sufficient to say that this great trophy of the victory over General Burgoyne's army remained in the hands of the regiment all night, and the American troops were never afterwards dispossessed of it, for, after the battle General Burgoyne fell back, and about a fortnight afterwards surrendered his whole army to General Gates.

"It is somewhat remarkable that, at the dinner at General Gates's that day the chief point of discussion among the officers was, whether we should commence the attack, or receive General Burgoyne behind our breastwork at the lines should he attempt to advance. Arnold contended for the former, saying 'that the assailant had the advantage, for he can always take his own time and choose the point of attack, and if repulsed, he has only to retreat behind his own lines and form again.' General Gates said on the contrary, 'If undisciplined militia were repulsed in the open field, and the enemy pressed upon them in their retreat, it would be difficult to form them again, even behind their own breastworks, for if they were under a panic they would keep on retreating, even after they had passed their own lines.'

"The opinion expressed by General Arnold in this discussion was probably the cause why Gates was afraid to trust him to go out when the firing was first heard, lest he should bring on an engagement in the open field, and contrary to his own opinion of its expediency."

In reading Governor Brooks' story, as thus related by his auditor, we may well raise the query, "What would have been the effect had his regiment fallen back, as his superior officer wished?" and admire his good judgment in remaining and holding the ground thus won. What wonder that in the hour of his honorable advancement (nearly forty years later), that the memory of that crucial time should have so visibly affected those two worthy men!

## A BIT OF MEDFORD ARCHAEOLOGY.

IN the summer of 1911 the upper reach of the Mystic River was dredged to a uniform depth, including the portion under Wear Bridge. By means of the gates in the Cradock dam the river was for a time drained to its lowest point, revealing the bottom, never before seen by mortal eyes. As the work progressed some interesting features were noticed, but none more so than the exhuming of a heavy framework of oak timber on the Medford side, about midway between Harvard and Fairfield avenues. It was in a good state of preservation, and though incomplete, enough remained intact to indicate the existence, long ago, of an extensive and substantial structure. Comparatively few people saw it, as the location was not much frequented, and it was, ere long, removed. By the accident of a Sunday morning stroll it was observed by the writer, who returned in the afternoon and secured the visible evidence shown in our illustration,* meanwhile wondering what the structure could have been. As nothing of the kind has been found elsewhere in Medford, a description of this may not be amiss as a matter of record.

The timber in the foreground was twelve inches square and about fourteen feet long. The two extending from it were nearly thirty feet long and tapered from twelve to ten inches. Extending from one to the other of these, and parallel with the first, was a ten-inch timber, and all were mortised and tenoned together. Midway, and parallel with the first, extending toward the river at the right and the land on the left, were two other ten-inch timbers about four feet apart. The framework was thus in the form of a Greek cross, one arm of which was over twice the width of the other. Mortises in the inner sides of

* The writer also made a sketch and measurements, which has been mislaid, and after developing his negative, made another visit, hoping to secure a better, but found it impossible as the water was higher and the timbers, waterlogged and heavy, were partially submerged. Absence from the city for a few weeks followed, and on his return he found it had been entirely removed, the river bank graded and flowed to the normal height.

the timbers showed that the arms of the cross had been timbered for a flooring, while others on the top sides indicated that upright timbers had been set up and sheathed, thus making one trough or sluiceway about ten feet wide, and two smaller ones, at right angles with it, about four feet. From the first mentioned timber there extended into the ground sloping, seven joists four by five inches in size. These were spiked into the notches cut in the large timber. No vestige of flooring or sheathing remained, nor joists to which either were fastened. They were probably of softer and lighter material, like pine or spruce, and therefore more easily removed. The upper mortises at the intersection of the cross were larger than those intervening, while those nearest the large timber in the foreground were nearly double the size of those larger ones. The timber at the farther end was cut two inches longer than the nearer width, thus allowing for the taper of the longest timbers.

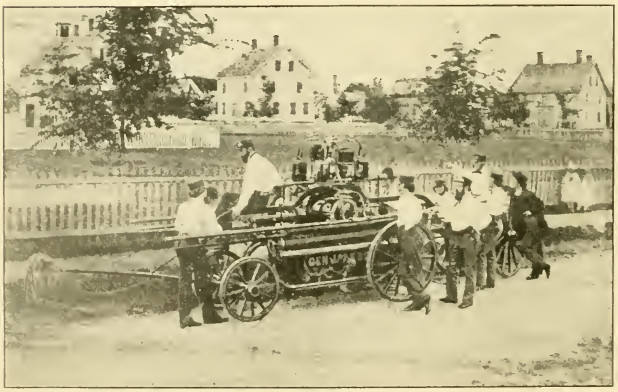
Naturally the query arose, "What was this structure of the past?" for its builders must have been artisans of long ago. The History of Medford (Brooks, p. 393) says:

"There was a mill a short distance below Wear bridge, but who built it and how long it stood we have not been able to discover. The place is still occupied." [1855.]

We can but wish that Mr. Brooks had been more explicit in the latter sentence. To the writer's certain knowledge there was no visible structure at this location in 1870, nor yet visible remains that would indicate anything below the surface of the tide-flowed bank. Inquiry among old residents fails to throw any light on the matter. Did Mr. Brooks mean that some remains of a tide-mill still existed at his time of writing, or were known to him in his earlier or boyhood days? In the same section he mentioned a sale of a "grist mill on the Menotomy side" in 1660. This mill was not in Medford, but in Charlestown (now Arlington), and just above the bend of the Mystic and mouth of the Menotomy river. (See Vol. XIII, p. 7, REGISTER.)

REMAINS OF OLD MILL.

Exhumed July, 1911, midway between Harvard and Fairfield Avenues.
Normal height of water is now at top of timber.




MEDFORD FIRE ENGINE "GENERAL JACKSON," 1849–1861.

Location, Park Street.

The ancient map of the Charlestown "Linefeilde" is interesting to note just here, in that it shows two islands in the river directly adjoining the location of this old frame. It, however, shows none just below Wear bridge but one existed there, as shown on the "Fuller Plan," 1855, and was removed a few years ago by the Park Commission. Thus it is evident that the configuration of the river has been subject to some change. Just below this old framework was a broad inlet or bay, which would form a tailrace of the mill's outflow. It is now sixty years since Mr. Brooks wrote his history of Medford and he was then sixty years of age. He doubtless saw some remains of the building (of which this was a part) a hundred years ago, but it was so ruinous as to baffle his efforts to identify the builders or operators. And so arises the query: "How old was this? When was it constructed?"

Two facts are evident: First, it was on land purchased of Edward Collins by Thomas Brooks and his son-in-law, Capt. Timothy Wheeler. Second, it must have been built at a time subsequent to that of the Broughton mill "on the Menotomy side," which was 1656. The highway from Cambridge to Woburn passed over the Broughton mill-dam to present Grove street, and had become disused for some years and was discontinued in 1708, the travel being diverted and crossing made further up stream at Wear bridge. The plan of the "Linefeilde," showing the two islands referred to, was doubtless prior to the building of the mill by Broughton, as no reference to it is found thereon, though it was on the Menotomy side. Again Broughton's mills "he built *in* the river of Misticke," and had a dam extending across the river, which flowed the water backward over the Symmes' meadows in present Winchester. This dam may have become so insecure as to cause its disuse as a roadway and caused its final abandonment. With its disuse came the opportunity for the erection of another mill farther up-stream, with the islands as a favorable site on which

to construct a wing dam. This old mill may safely be set down as having been constructed two centuries ago, and must have served an important purpose in the routine of affairs in that old Medford that lay four miles along the Mystic.

M. W. M.

## GOVERNOR BROOKS ENGINE COMPANY.

FROM the formation of the Medford Amicable Fire Society to our motor-driven fire apparatus is a far cry. Midway between, the *Brooks' History of Medford* was written. On page 475 are some sound ideas that, later adopted, make our fire department efficient. By the courtesy of its chief engineer the REGISTER presents (so far as known) the first printed view of one of Medford's engines, in use at the time the history was written. It will be readily recognized by older people; possibly some of the firemen and the locality may be identified.

Allusion has been made in a former issue to several old books of record. Those of the General Jackson are not of the number. The other two engines were of the same type and build, and our illustration may well portray the one in charge of the Governor Brooks Company. There is much in these old books that throws light upon the doings and diversions of some of the men of the time before the war. The apparatus they used is obsolete, the volunteer system a thing of the past, but the records are both instructive and amusing.

The original company of the name was formed in November, 1835. James T. Floyd was foreman and George L. Stearns, clerk. By July 2, 1839, its numbers had been so reduced that it was voted to surrender the engine to the selectmen and disband.

Twenty days later a new company of twenty-nine men was formed, with John T. White as foreman and D. H. Forbes, clerk and treasurer. The town had procured a new engine, to which the same name was given, and had voted to sell the old one. Passing over a period of ten

years, we find that the company celebrated its anniversary on June 6, 1850, which was the ninety-eighth of the birth of Governor Brooks,

in the following manner, To meet at the Engine House at 10 o'clock Precisely, arm and ready to pay all bills. Voted, to Hire Mr Young White Horse to draw the Engine in the porcession around town in the afternoon and in the evening the Company adjourn to the Town Hall where the company will pass off the time with sentiments and a Speech from some one of the Company should we be so fortunate as to get some one to volunteer their Services on the Ocation. Voted that every member have the privilidge of inviting one or more ladyes. Voted to extend an invitation to the Selectmen and Engineers to parade with us.

At another meeting —

Voted to choose A. H. Gardner, tostMaster. Voted that Mr Usher envite as meny of his friends as he thinks proper.

Voted that the cards be distributed at 1 o'clock on Thursday where the Members pay the assesment.

At the next meeting it was voted

to return a vote of thanks to Mr Usher and a five dollar Bill with it.

Evidently the Governor Brooks Company was in good humor, as its committee had reported money received, $106.00; amount of bills, $100.52; balance, $5.48; collected by subscription, $3.66. The latter is not added to the balance on the record. Evidently some one had "passed round the hat" with an eye to making good with Mr. Usher, which was done by the "tostMaster."

Mr. Young's white horse got no thanks, but instead, "Mr. Ford, for the use of his Colt."

Along with the two books of record is preserved a manuscript of twenty-five pages in Mr. Usher's handwriting — the "Speech" that enabled them to "pass off the time." In its opening sentences we learn that they had "listened to the music of the band and heard the music of the choir," whatever the difference may have been.*

* It would seem that Medford had a band at that time, as a little later the company (through Captain Hutchins) invited the "Medford Brass Band to partake of its clam chowder."

After the usual amount of self-deprecation common to public speakers, Mr. Usher proceeded with a review of the life and public service of Governor Brooks, emphasizing his many excellent traits of character and urging the auditors to emulate them. The episode in his military career, related elsewhere in this issue of the REGISTER, was alluded to, as also his patriotic stand against the disaffected officers at Newburg. In the latter part of his address he mentioned various appliances that had been crudely tried, with partial success, for subduing fire. These have since materialized in the modern chemical engine.

Mr. Usher was then in his thirty-sixth year, and no doubt was at his best, as flashes of wit appear at intervals in the address. The Town Hall where he spoke was not our recently much-maligned and "still doing business at the old stand" edifice, neither was it the first Town Hall of Medford, but the second and larger building, built ten years before. It replaced the one burnt in 1839, and the good judgment (regardless of civic pride) of the Medford people followed the old design of a leading architect of Boston, who planned the former structure. A few months after this anniversary occasion it fell a prey to the devouring flames, but no mention thereof appears in the records of the company.

It appears that despite the excellent lessons of discipline and obedience to authority drawn by Mr. Usher from the life of Governor Brooks, a year had not elapsed when there was a "walk out" of the company, which then formed the "Ex-Brooks Company," and hired a room to meet in for a time.

On September 7, 1852, the record shows a reinstatement of the company by the engineers. Things moved smoothly once more until March 14, 1858, when at a fire at the "Plains" a disagreement arose, and the company was disbanded by the engineers. Then the "Ex-Brooks Association" was formed, a constitution adopted, officers elected and a few meetings held, the records ending with

that of December 4, 1858, when Mr. Palmer was chosen a "committee to get subscribers to a good time generally among ourselves."

Medford had two other engine companies, and there was certain and constant rivalry between these men that "manned the brakes" and "ran with the machines," and mostly of the younger men. Clannish, jovial, they were always in for a good time — oyster suppers, clam chowders, target and fishing excursions — and always ready to help any "Hunneman tub" that was challenged to a trial. The engineers complained that they used too much "fluid," but this was the burning fluid used in the lamps of that period. They were always ready to contribute to the relief of a needy member, or to a member's bereaved family. Several instances of this are on record, also of gravestones erected in memory of comrades.

Yet it is an open question, which was the most important, the subduing of the flames, or the washing of the other tub. As "all was fair in love and war," the spy system was in vogue, as seen by the vote of July 2, 1850,

Voted to choose a committee of two to Study out something to keepe People that have there nose in other folks business from looking into No. 1 Plungers Trying to see what they are pack with.

If the schoolmaster was *abroad*, and some of the records give evidence that he had been, the spirit of invention was rife, as witness the story told of the secret valve in the bottom of the "tub," which the foreman could operate with his foot to prevent a "wash."

An effort was made at a previous time to have two "minitures" taken of the engine, to present to past foremen of the company, but the vote was rescinded. After the disbanding, various extra fixtures were given to members.

One relic of the old hand engines is still in useful service in the Medford Highway Department. It is the four wheels, spire and bottom of the tub, on which is placed a tool box. Is it that of the *old* Governor Brooks engine?

## OUR OLD MASTER.

A Memory of the Hathaway School.

By an Old Scholar.

Dear childhood's days! Your ghosts come back sometimes
  Like sweet siroccos from the scented isles,
From far Ceylon, or from those spicy climes
  That greet the god of day with loving smiles.

Today one comes on memory's fleeting breath.
  A spirit with a saintly mien and face,
Has long been tied behind the doors of death.
  'Tis one who helped ambition set its pace,

And taught us how to try our trembling wings
  As mothers teach young linnets how to fly,
And showed us, too, where flow the crystal springs,
  And where the tempests thundered through the sky.

Is there, great God, within yon realm of dreams,
  A paradise where men shall meet again?
An Eden far beyond the sunset's gleam?
  And has it freshest meads and many a glen?

Oh, then, we beg you, let us see our friend!
  No sweeter father learning ever knew;
No gentler gard'ner helped a twig to bend,
  Nor showed the paths where reddest roses grew.

C. G. F.

## NOTES ABOUT TOWN.

During the past month several vessels, loaded with lumber from the Provinces have come up the Mystic, the first consignment to Medford by water for eighteen years. With three discharging at the same time, Foster's Wharf has something of the old-time look. But the old ship-building days never had over a hundred craft hauled up on wharf and mill-yard for winter quarters, as may now be seen.

The Jonathan Brooks house (at the present writing) is being repaired, and so takes on a new lease of life. With the exception of three windows in the roof no

change is made in the exterior appearance, but new sills and timbers beneath a new floor make the old homestead secure.

This would delight the heart of Medford's historian could he visit his childhood's home. But we fancy he would take exception to the recent statement of a Boston daily that Jonathan Brooks was the founder of the Brooks family in America, and that Governor Brooks was born, lived and died in this house, as was also stated by the same *journalist* who was given the subject to "cover." Upon being told, *prior* to its publication, that the same was incorrect, he replied, "I haven't time to hunt up the facts, but must write *something*.

---

Molasses rock, above the Fellsway, is said to be in danger of destruction. We have never heard of any *historic* significance attached to it. The peculiar feature whereby it got its "sweet name" is its geological formation. Several sections of a different kind of rock, running perpendicularly through it, give it an appearance not unlike the "we paint the earth" advertising signs. Molasses or paint spilt on its top might look thus, but wouldn't be as lasting.

---

We regret to record the demolition of the Meridian monument, erected in Medford by Harvard College over sixty years ago,* during recent months. A stone dwelling, of the cottage type, has been erected on the bluff overlooking Winthrop street, and part of the stones of the cairn form a *small* portion of its walls. At a recent visit to the spot, the capstone and a few of the larger quoins lay near its site, as yet disused.

We are told that the owner of the new structure is interested in educational matters, which adds to the surprise and regret occasioned by the seeming needless removal of the old scientific landmark.

* See REGISTER, Vol. XVI, p. 45.

Mr. Dame gave his High School boys at one time as a subject to write on, "The Brooks of Medford," advising an actual search and tracing to their sources. Doubtless the young people found the latter interesting. One brook is today a sort of "lost river" — the tributary of Meeting-house brook, which has its source near Smith's lane between Woburn and Winthrop Streets. We were told to look there for remains of the projected Stoneham railroad, but found instead that Lily pond lane (near the rock-cut) crosses the Albree brook which flows underground for many rods before it emerges to view in another enclosed field, where must have been the mill-pond of John Albree, the Medford weaver.

Some rods from the lane are parallel stone walls, about three rods long, *through* which the brook flows, and in the open space between, the ground slopes in either direction to the brook.

No, this wasn't the railroad at all, but was a drinking-place for cattle, unique but useful, and an arrangement not often seen.

---

Will some one find for us the boundary lines agreed upon by Caleb Brooks, John Hall, Thomas Willis, Stephen Willis and John Whitmore of Medford, in 1680, or locate the points named?

"From a great tree in the orchard, to a black oak tree * * * to a stake standing up in the land between Brooks and Francis * * * to a little black oak * * * to an old stub in clay land * * * to a little black oak bush near the river."

---

## QUERIES.

Where in Medford (1854) was Short street?

Where was Snake-hole?

Is there anywhere in Medford a hollowed rock, used by the Indians as a mill or grinding rock?

Vol. XVII.] [No. 2.

# HISTORICAL REGISTER

APRIL, 1914

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MEDFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

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(Signed) _____


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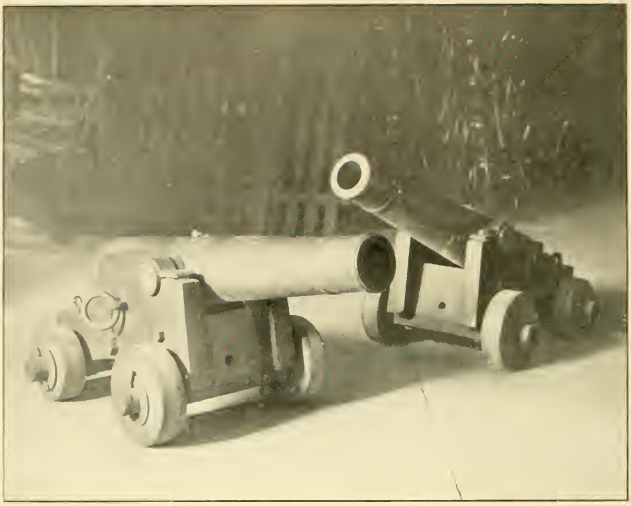
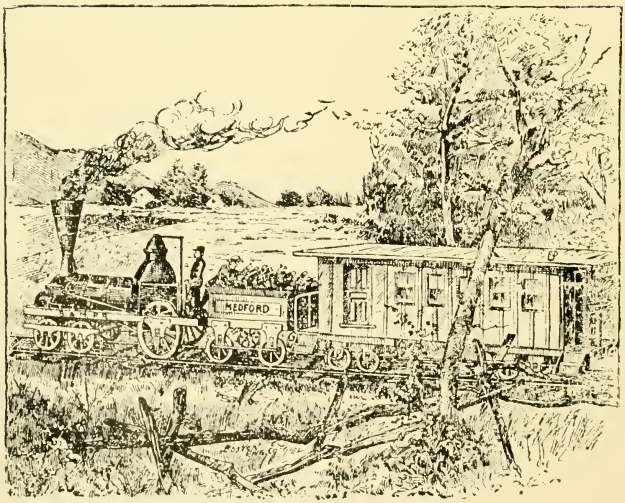


CANNON PRESENTED TO MEDFORD, 1874,
BY THATCHER MAGOUN.




THE FIRST ON MEDFORD BRANCH.

# The Medford Historical Register.

Vol. XVII. APRIL, 1914. No. 2.

## MEDFORD ARTILLERY.

ONE organization, of military character, at one time existed that has never found place in Medford annals, though its time fell just previous to the revision of Brooks' history by Mr. Usher. We refer to the Magoun Battery.

In the preparation of this sketch the writer has consulted the records of the selectmen, the published annual reports of the town officers, records at the State House, and the files of Medford and Boston papers. He has also conversed with numerous citizens, some of whom were members of the company, but has been unable to find any trace of the records made by its clerk.

The existence of the company grew out of no military exigency, but from the old-style noisy celebration of Independence Day, which required a salute fired at morning, noon and night. In 1870 and 1871 this was by "George Nichols' old gun" (as we are told), each time at an expense of $50. In 1872 (see town report) the payment was to Mr. Nichols, "$55.50, 3 salutes, 37 guns each." In 1873 $100 was paid the 3d Light Battery, M. V. M., for similar service, and the increasing expense may have been the incentive to the gift of guns to Medford, that at last, disused, disappeared from public knowledge and notice.

Prior to and during the Civil War many vessels carried an armament, for protection in foreign seas and against Confederate cruisers. One of these was the *Swallow*, owned by Thatcher Magoun of Medford, which had two brass cannon (six pounders), mounted on low wooden carriages after the usual manner of ships' guns.

Mr. Magoun, in a letter to the selectmen, signified his desire to present the same to the town, for the purpose

of salutes, if they should deem the gift acceptable. Receiving a favorable reply, a letter of presentation followed and was received by them, as of record of June 27, 1874.

The board voted to receive the cannon and make an acknowledgment with thanks, and further voted "to place the cannon *in charge of the committee on almshouse*" (italics our own). Two days later the committee reported the guns received and stored at the almshouse. Though Medford "had the guns and the money too," they continued to be lodged at the almshouse, and the town paid Battery C $100 for a salute on the Fourth of July, $8.90 for cleaning guns, and $15 to "Uncle" David Simpson for meals for the battery men.

"And now appears" a citizen, Charles Russell by name, and others who urged the formation of an artillery company to take charge of the *Swallow* battery and use it in accordance with the intent of the donor. As such an organization was not a part of the State militia, its status was much like that of the old fire companies, and yielding to their desire, the selectmen on November 7, 1874, record the signing of a petition to the Governor for a license to form an association to care for the guns. Who was to present the same, or whether it ever reached the Governor, is not known, as inquiry at his office reveals nothing. Evidently such an association was or had been formed, as a week later a petition was received from members of the Swallow Battery, asking for the guns to be placed in their care and possession. Whether they were so placed, or remained *guests at the almshouse*, is uncertain, as nothing more appears of record until April 5, 1875, when it was voted that the *Magoun* battery be housed in the building of S. H. Pearce & Co. The next week *Captain* Russell appeared again, asking for authority to procure a place of storage for a few weeks. An appropriation of $850 had been made to purchase equipments for the guns, and all but forty cents was expended therefor. This included gun-carriages, ammunition wagon, and "one artillery saddle." It has been said that the guns,

which were but four feet long, looked, on these carriages, rather diminutive to experts, but by the average layman this was unnoticed.

On April 19, 1875, occurred at Lexington the first of the centennial celebrations. This was attended by the Magoun Battery, which took the place assigned it in the procession, and also on June 17th it attended the centennial of Bunker Hill, in Charlestown and Boston. This last was the company's busy day, as James M. Usher and others had asked for a salute at West Medford, as well as at the center of the town, which was fired at morning and night.

On June 28 some of the East Medford people asked for a share of the noise, and as the western section wanted *more* on July 5, the selectmen settled the matter by directing Captain Russell to fire with *both* guns at the center.

The guns and equipment were housed somewhere temporarily until late in the year, when a building was erected for the town by William Stetson, at an expense of $600, upon the Swan lot, known as the "Pit," where is now Governors Avenue. The company preferred this location to one on Union street, and the matter was left to the discretion of selectman Hooper, who foreseeing possible exigencies, there placed it, the highway men building the foundation therefor, thus securing a storage place beneath for some of their apparatus. It was a serviceable structure, and the selectmen reported that in the *latter* respect it would prove an entire success. A view of it may be found in the *Medford Mercury*. The company were given leave to finish a room in its second story at its own expense. This was fitted up as a gymnasium, for the men were well drilled, and as one said recently, "We were *it*, and always had a fine, good time, and enjoyed the exercise, drill and public parades to the full." They had their seasons of gayety and pleasure like other organizations, "firemen, military and civic."

It is unfortunate that no files of the Medford *Journal* or the *Chronicle* are to be found, as these covered the

time of the company's history, but a few references to the latter's functions are found in the first volume of the *Mercury*. In those former papers were accounts of things then transpiring of interest to Medford people of today. In 1876 Edwin C. Burbank was in command, in 1878 George T. Sampson, and in 1880 Julian D'Este.

On September 17, 1880, the battery appeared in the third division of the great procession at Boston's two hundred and fiftieth anniversary. We have been told that on that, or some similar occasion, its remarkably fine appearance was noted by someone on the reviewing stand, or by the State authorities, who are said to have ordered its dissolution. Certain it is that in September of the next year the battery fired minute guns on Medford common on the occasion of President Garfield's funeral, and this was *possibly* their last appearance in public as an organization.

On June 21, 1882, the selectmen received a communication from the company relative to its disbandment, and of the property in its possession including cartridges for a salute. The selectmen voted that a salute be fired on July 4, using half the cartridges in the morning and the rest at night, the *ex-members* of the battery to do the firing. Next, the clerk of the battery was directed to turn over the keys of the building to the clerk of selectmen after the salute. In the printed report of the selectmen for 1882 the battery is said to have been dissolved by order of the Adjutant-general of the Commonwealth. It was currently reported in Medford at that time that such was the case, as the association was not of the militia, and consequently an illegal organization not entitled to bear arms; that Medford selectmen were liable to, or threatened with, prosecution, etc.

No *record* of any such order appears on the books of the selectmen, nor yet can be found in the Adjutant-general's office. The financial reports of the town show various expenditures for artillery supplies, collations, saddle, powder, silk and flannel—covering a period of eight years.

Meanwhile the people were becoming tired of noise, and when (after the disbandment) some one petitioned for a salute on July 4, the selectmen voted "to do so if some responsible person furnish the powder."

Just before this they had voted "to allow Mr. Allen to use the wheels of the Magoun Battery." Heman Allen was the chief of the highway men, and so it is reasonable to conclude that the wheels of the gun-carriages and ammunition wagon, and the harnesses, were worn out in the more useful service of that department. As to the ultimate fate of the somewhat famous saddle we are unable to say.

Who furnished uniforms, sabres and other military toggery that was used in the public parades we cannot say; probably the company provided itself with such, but the town horses drew the guns on some occasions, on others the town hired horses for the purpose.

It is really true (as has been said) that the men wore coats cut in style of evening dress; by some at times they were called the Swallow-tail Battery. They were at first called the Swallow Battery (from the name of the ship), but the *tail* was simply an appendage, and was applied in the same spirit of banter as was the burlesque "Muldoon Battery" in an Antique and Horrible parade that attracted much attention.

On December 1, 1884, the selectmen voted "that the guns of the Magoun Battery be placed in charge of Captain Clark's command," *i.e.*, the Lawrence Light Guard. May 28, 1888, Captain Clark reported that "the guns were exposed to the weather and ought to be covered." This was referred to "Mr. Clark" (William P. Clark, chairman of the board). On April 2, 1889, Mr. Clark was made a "committee on the care of and placing the guns in position at the library." Two weeks later he reported, "the library committee desired no further action." January 2, 1890, that committee was invited to confer with the selectmen, and on the 28th James A. Hervey appeared thereabout. He stated, "the committee do not consider the grounds a suitable place" (the local press

has quoted him, "the library is neither a fort or an arsenal"), and suggested that the guns be sold and books bought with the proceeds.

The selectmen, in report of 1888, had recommended "an appropriation of $100 for preservation and care of cannon," the same to be properly mounted and placed on the library grounds. This sum was appropriated, and of the amount $2.17 was expended. Also on March 10, 1890, the town voted that the gun-carriages, harnesses and other equipments be sold by the selectmen and that the library committee consider what is best to be done with the cannon and report at some future meeting. On February 17, 1891, the selectmen granted the library committee permission to remove the *trucks* of the Magoun Battery from the shop of Dawson & Porter to the library or elsewhere, as they may see fit. The "trucks" were the carriages on which the guns were mounted when Mr. Magoun donated them, and on which they were again placed.

We have failed to find any record of sale of harnesses or equipment as above authorized (nor yet of the famous saddle), and we think our conclusions as to their final disposal correct. But what of the cannon that were placed in Captain Clark's charge thirty years ago? Some three years since we learned of their location. Though not generally known, they remain where the selectmen placed them — in the armory of the Light Guard. They are marked 458 and 459 (probably foundry numbers). They are about three and three-quarters inch bore, five and three-quarters outside at muzzle, nine at breech, and four feet in length. On each is cast the figure of an eagle, and in each is cut the inscription, "Presented to the Town of Medford, Mass., June 17, 1874." No copy of Mr. Magoun's letter of presentation appears in the printed report of town officers, issued February, 1875. We recall it as it appeared in the *Medford Journal* of June, 1874. It was probably overshadowed by the larger and more useful gift of Mr. Magoun of "the Mansion

House of my honoured father," for a library building. Yet the gift of the guns was prompted by a spirit of helpfulness to his town as an economic measure. We scarcely think that the donor expected his gift to become an undue expense to it, or an "elephant" on its hands.

One of the guns shows the effect of an attempt at re-polishing, which gives color to the remark, "General Lawrence intended to have them polished and placed in the foyer of the armory."

The library committee evidently removed the trucks "elsewhere" (than the library), but we fail to find any report of its doings "to some future meeting." In the discussion in town meeting some advocated selling the guns and buying books (with the proceeds) that should be inscribed with the name of Magoun, while others dissented. So it has happened that after forty years the guns remain safely stored away in the basement of the armory, and the Medford artillery company that was honorable is now ancient and almost forgotten.

### George Nichols' Old Gun.

This was a brass gun about two and a half feet long, said to have been used in the Everglades in the first Florida or Seminole war by General Jackson nearly a hundred years ago. Because of this it bore the name *Old Hickory*.

In later years it was mounted as a ship's gun on the *Kate Hastings*, one of the vessels of Henry Hastings of Medford. Still later it was given by him to George Nichols, who had it for some years, and who at last loaned it for exhibition in another town. We are told it was to a club, Wild Goose by name. At all events, it went on a "wild-goose chase" and never came back to Medford. After Mr. Nichols got it, it was remounted, Theophilus (Tope) Johnson making an oaken carriage, such as it formerly had.

It was heard often in the ante-bellum days on Fourth of July, election times, and during war time in Medford.

Special mention is made of the racket made one Sunday forenoon, on the receipt of news of the capture of Jeff Davis. The gun was placed on the marsh, where is now the parkway and Armory bridge, and the indignation of the worshipers at the Trinitarian Church just across the river was intense as they hastily retired from the building. It is said that threats of prosecution of the firing party were made, and also that there was one, at least, that stood ready to reimburse the delinquent if fine was imposed by the court, and in the light of then existing sectarian feeling (now happily passed) it is more than likely true.

All the political parties were served by *Old Hickory* (for the gun was non-partisan) in election times, including the Bell–Everett, or Union Party, in 1860. It was an open question which made the most noise, the bell hauled through the streets, or the gun. The latter is heard no more in Medford, but the bell is heard hourly every day and night as the clock on the Mystic Church strikes. The gun, like some small dogs, made a big amount of noise for its size, and even outdid the guns of the State battery the town hired. Some ship launchings were not thought complete without a salute as the vessel slid from the ways.

### The Molly Stark.

Some years since the writer was told that there was once an old gun at East Medford called the *Morning Star*. Visions of the missionary vessel the children paid for arose in his mind, and the appellation seemed incongruous. This was at the time of search for the Magoun guns that had been lost sight of.

Inquiry revealed that the said gun was an old iron cannon, possibly a relic of the Revolution, that had been picked up somewhere, but no definite information could be obtained save that it was called *Molly Stark*. It used to be in evidence on special occasions, like others in the old days of noise, "horribles" and uncouth demonstration

of so-called patriotism. It has long since disappeared, probably into the junk pile, and Medford is no loser.

The names *Molly Stark* and *Old Hickory* are examples of the custom that obtained in war times. Military men tell us that battery guns received from their company various names, like *Whistling Tom*, or *Pretty Mary*, and the siege gun at Charleston, the *Swamp Angel*, had a nation-wide notice. We have never heard that the guns of the Magoun battery were thus designated.

By the courtesy of a member of the Historical Society, C. H. Tinkham, we print a view of Medford's artillery.

## ABOUT THE POWDER RAID.

In the remarks upon the farm advertised "to be lett" (Vol. XVI, page 69 of the REGISTER) it is stated that the farm was once invaded by the British when they removed the powder from the old powder house in Somerville.

The British troops landed at Temple's, and no doubt marched over the way from the Temple place (now called Temple street) to the main street, and from thence a straight road over what is now called Broadway to the powder house. The landing-place at Temple's, as shown on a map of "Boston and its environs in 1775," was at or near the point where Wellington bridge connects with the shore on the south side of the river in the city of Somerville. — J. H. H.

ON PAGE 2 OF *Mass. Gazette*, SEPT. 1, 1774.

This Morning a Party of the Troops proceeded to Charlestown, and took Possession of the Powder in the Powder-House there, and are now conveying it round to Boston in Waggons, and then proceeded to Medford Powder House for the like Purpose.

— E. M. G.

QUERIES. — Was the powder house above mentioned the one now in the park near West Somerville (then Charlestown?)

Does "carrying round to Boston in Waggons" mean via Cambridge, Roxbury and Boston Neck?

Had Medford then a powder house, or was the one in the first query the one referred to? — EDITOR.

## THE OTIS HOUSE.

Miss Wild, in her paper entitled "Old Salem Street" (Vol. XVI, page 63 of the REGISTER), makes mention of an old house that formerly stood on Salem street, called in the latter days of its existence the "Otis house" (it took its name from its last tenant, Mr. William Otis, the farmer who occupied the farm owned by Mr. Dudley Hall), and expressed a wish that some one would "write up" the house.

I do not think that much more can be said regarding the house than has already been said in the paper above referred to, but a few facts may be stated in regard to the farm that may be of interest. Under date of November 21, 1721, a portion of the estate of Capt. Peter Tufts, who owned and occupied the so-called "Cradock house," was set off to Dr. Simon Tufts, one of his sons, and was bounded on the Malden road (Salem street) about sixty-five rods, the line extending from near Park street to Spring street. No mention is made of any building on the estate. After the death of Dr. Tufts there was set off to his widow, Abigail Tufts, as a part of her dower, forty-eight acres of land, with house and barn. This house is identical with the "Otis house," and was built subsequent to the year 1721, probably within a few years after the farm came into the possession of Dr. Tufts.

—JOHN H. HOOPER.

## MEDFORD BRANCH RAILROAD.

NOW that Medford's railway facilities, and especially the public accommodation by steam trains from the center, is being discussed by the Board of Trade, a sketch of the Branch may be timely.

This railroad was chartered May 7, 1845, on petition of James O. Curtis and others. In town meeting of June 22, 1845, the petition was endorsed by vote, and another vote instructed the selectmen to appear before the Legislature and look after the town's interests. The

Boston & Maine Railroad was in its infancy then, and as late as March, 1842, had no tracks nearer Boston than Wilmington. From that point its trains went to Boston over the pioneer railroad, the Boston & Lowell, some four miles of which lay in the western section of Medford. At about the latter date Edward Smith, who was road master (of Boston & Maine) many years, took an engine across town from the siding at West Medford, through the streets to Malden, to be used there on the construction train.

The Boston & Lowell was also an infant. Chartered in 1829, and six years in building, it had been ten years in operation when the Medford Branch was projected. By the latter's construction Medford had easy access to Boston, with its own terminal at Medford square, then called the market-place. It would have been better if that committee had looked more clearly after the interests of the town than it did, and not have permitted a grade crossing of old Ship street.

Of the Branch, *Brooks' History* says, "It was readily finished and proves to be a productive and convenient road"—and it was, in its infantile days. At the present time it is a problem to the managers, and a small factor in passenger transit.

Of its early days the REGISTER has secured items of interest, mostly from townsman Francis A. Wait, from whom we quote:—

About 1845 a large, fine dwelling house, owned by the heirs of Ebenezer Hall, stood where the B. & M. R. R. Depot on Main street, Medford, stands today. It was the best house between the square and the hotel on South street. The place was sold to the railroad, and James B. Gregg came into the possession of the house and removed it to the south side of the river. It was the second building from Cradock bridge on the west side of Main street. It was burned November, 1850. Passengers passed through the depot into the train shed that housed two cars; extra cars stood outside. The ticket office had a window in the main building and in the shed also. There were three docks from the river to Ship street. The railroad partially closed two of them. Crossing Ship street, it had a fairly clear route to the main line, running under

bridges at Cross and Park streets. At Park street a locomotive tank was supplied with water from an ordinary hand pump mounted on a platform. Spring street and Glenwood were not on the map in 1845–6–7. One old house was at the foot of a lane near the present crossing. The land farther down was swamp and salt marsh. The road was single tracked; engine, built at Lowell, weighed about eleven tons and was without a cab; cars to correspond; small, stuffy depots, and earned a good dividend for the stockholders. Today, with a double track, first-class equipment in all respects, it does not earn its expenses.

| Engineers. | Conductors. |
|---|---|
| Joseph Seavy. | John F. Sanborn. |
| Robert Gregg. | Ralph Smith. |
| James B. Rice. | William Crook. |
| George Folsom. | Edward Weymouth. |
| John F. Sanborn. | Albert Hamilton. |

John F. Sanborn was conductor a short time and then station agent at South Reading, and later in a provision store, ship-yard, and policeman in Medford; later was engineer on the Medford Branch until the railroad strike in 1877, then to New York Elevated, where he died about 1880.

Mr. Sanborn will be remembered as the engineer who, feeling bound by his membership in the Brotherhood of Engineers, left his engine when the general strike was ordered. He, however, ran it into the engine house and left it in proper order and safe condition, this in contrast to some others. The strike was unsuccessful, and later a company of Medford citizens asked for his reinstatement. The managers bore testimony to his previous excellent service, but firmly declined, saying, "The men who served us in our need at the risk of their lives (meaning more than ordinary railroad risk) cannot be displaced to make room for *any* who deserted us."

In the equipment of the road (the cars, engines and station houses) there has been a change as the years have passed. Our illustration, the first engine and car, shows a marked contrast with the present. Some allowance must be made for old prints, as compared with modern photographic views, but we have seen a drawing, made by one we know capable, that tallies with this, which is

said to have appeared first in *Gleason's Pictorial* and reprinted in some other in later years. The views in *Barber's Historical Collection* almost always showed men and boys under *tall hats*, and even the "first steam train in America" is notable therefor. In our old-time picture the engine men wear the more sensible *cap*, while the fuel shown is wood. There were then no coal-burning engines.

Next there was

Engine *Cocheco*, built at Lowell, on the Branch a long time; weight, twelve tons. And later, and for many years, the engine *Camilla*, that weighed twenty tons and was built in Boston.

We fancy that Mr. Crook, the conductor, with his hat, dickey and resplendent badge would create a sensation on the Medford Branch today.

The Branch has not been without its fatalities, one in its early days —

James B. Gregg, a prominent business man in Medford, was killed on the Branch at Medford Junction April 28, 1848.

Up to the nineties locomotive engines bore names and were resplendent with brass, which made the fireman's task in keeping it bright somewhat onerous. Sometimes a large, new engine would be tried out on the Branch. Such were those mentioned in the *Journal*, Mr. Usher saying, "General Grant and General Sherman were in town last week. A large company followed them to Boston, but on arriving there were glad to get away from their terrible power," etc. Of course people hurried to their business and gladly went out of the smoke and grime of the train house.

We recall that the "flying switch" was discontinued at terminals at the time of the strike as a safety measure, and trains since have been "pulled in." Now the great shed re-echoes with puff and snort, and reeks with hissing steam. Soot-laden smoke, sticky grime and cinder mud make us prefer and use the cleaner electric power.

The engine *Camilla* seems to have inspired a Medford boy to poetic flight, as appears in these verses: —

## CAMILLA, 30.

In the golden days of youth,
Of which many of us know
Who lived in old town Medford
Some three decades ago,
There was a steed attractive
To the youthful minds aglow,
'Twas the iron horse "Camilla"
Of thirty years ago.

This creature, almost human,
Was astir from morn till night;
She'd take the road at six-twenty,
And till dark pursue her flight;
Was waited for by hundreds
And seldom ever slow—
That bright, old, sleek "Camilla"
Of thirty years ago.

The bell upon the depot,
Which is never heard today,
Would call the many people
Who wished to go away;
But there would ring a sweeter one
As through Park Street she'd go,
'Twas that of dear "Camilla"
Of thirty years ago.

We'd hear her on the crossing
And coming round the curve;
She'd always make the "fly-switch"
With very steady nerve,
And over Mystic River,
Where tide would ebb and flow,
She'd make the drawbridge quiver,
Some thirty years ago.

The pride of all the round-house,
But especially of John,
Whose full name was John Sanborn,
A name so now well known.
Though not the superintendent,
He was without a foe,
And ran this old "Camilla"
Just thirty years ago.

We loved our old "Camilla,"
We boys and girls as well;
We loved to ride behind her
And listen to her bell.
That sound was one of welcome
Where'er we wished to go,
'Twas our young pride "Camilla"
Of thirty years ago.

'Twas when Conductor Hamilton
Would wave his hand, she'd start
And through the bridge and down the track
She'd travel like a dart.
Would fly her way to Wellington;
I'd like to have you know
That none could beat "Camilla"
Of thirty years ago.

And on the double track
She was always found in line;
Would reach her place in Boston
In twenty minutes' time.
But then, the cars were smaller
And "links and pins" the go
And air brakes unfamiliar,
Some thirty years ago.

But things since then have changed
And also numbers too,
And engine names have gone,
While many men are through
Who used to work and wonder
And travel to and fro
Behind dear, passed "Camilla"
Of thirty years ago.

As boys and girls we are no more,
As in the days gone by,
We have grown and scattered,
And some of us lie
Awaiting the train—of angels—
Heaven's bright call, and lo!
The "reward" long promised
Of the golden years ago.

—CHARLES E. PRESTON.

New York City.

The *Camilla* was an "insider," *i.e.*, the steam cylinders were inside the space between the forward trucks. The power was exerted upon the cranked axle of the forward driving wheels, a type of locomotive now rare.

Soon after the *Camilla's* retirement three new engines

were put in service, named *Medford*, *Mystic* and *Cradock*, the latter larger than the others. They were outside connection and "double enders," having head-light and "cow-catcher" at the end of the tank, this low enough to allow the driver view of the track as the backward run was made. These did away with the turn-table at the engine house. The turning around of the engine was always of interest to the boys of Medford, as elsewhere.

The names and ornamental brass have gone, but the "double-enders" are still in commission on the Branch. Another thing gone is the bell on the roof. It became cracked and went to the railroad "graveyard." Its ringing was a public convenience missed by many. The station master would deal out his tickets and make change with one hand and pull the bell-rope with the other, and experienced patrons and listeners knew by the sound of the bell how brisk the last minute's patronage was. A time card, probably the earliest issued, October 4, 1847, announces trains

From Medford, 7, 8¼ A.M., 1½, 3½ & 5 P.M.
From Boston, 7½ A.M., 12 M., 2¼, 4½ & 6 P.M.
Saturday evening. From Medford, 6½ P.M.
From Boston, 9 P.M.
Fare 12 cts.

There was a time when it seemed probable that the Medford station would become a way-station by the building of an extension to Stoneham (see REGISTER, Vol. XVI p. 90), but the project failed to materialize and a terminal it has remained. It has been remodelled at times, the entrance moved nearer the square, a somewhat pretentious waiting-room made in it, now somewhat dimmed in its lustre but more than equal to the demand at the present writing. The Medford Branch carries people safely, brings freight into the city, carries away a little, but its *palmy* days have passed, unless, indeed, by its electrification or rearrangement in some way it may better serve the people of Medford in their daily travel.

## MEDFORD WEATHER.

WE LIVE in a region having a variable climate, and the same season in different years shows either great change or extremes of temperature. January, 1913, had a very light snow-fall, and has been put on record as being remarkably warm. The night of January 12, 1914, with high wind brought a drop in temperature and frozen water pipes that will not soon be forgotten by Medford householders. Two weeks later and spring conditions prevailed, reaching a climax on February 4, changing to winter and first real snow storm of the season at nightfall of the 6th. Today, February 12, 1914, Boston is experiencing the coldest day for eighteen years. New England is the coldest section of the country, and the thermometers in our city have registered from eleven degrees to sixteen degrees below, and a Boston paper gives credit for twenty-three degrees below, probably in the out-lying districts. For days the ground has been covered with a few inches of well-packed snow, furnishing ideal sleighing on the streets off the main line of car traffic, and the creaking of the teams gives evidence that it is winter in earnest.

It is many years since, in this vicinity, that travel by steam or electric car lines has been impeded by great drifts or deep, level snow, or that we have been housed up until roads or sidewalks could be broken out.

Old-fashioned New England winters are so often spoken of it may not be amiss to refer to an account of one in our town nearly two hundred years ago. This was published sixty-nine years ago. The author, then a man over eighty, speaking of facts communicated to him by his father, and of changes noticed by the latter, said: —

"Mr. James Boies, father of the writer, was born in Ireland in the year 1700, and emigrated to this country when only six years old, with the family of his parents, and when a youth lived with a farmer in Medford, Massachusetts bay, who was in the practice of furnishing supplies to the Inhabitants of Boston, by the road to Charlestown ferry.

"The first occurrence worthy of notice is the great change of climate in the winters of that period to those of more modern years, especially in the quantities of snow. I have heard him relate the following fact, to which he was a witness, and happened about the winter of 1715; the snow fell to an unusual depth, with much of drift, causing great distress to the then thinly settled inhabitants; among the number was a Widow, living in a one-story house with her children, who had her buildings situate on the road to Charlestown, called milk row, so deeply covered with snow that it could not be found for many days, until discovered by the smoke issuing from above the snow bank; her small stock of fuel was exhausted, and some of her furniture was also burnt to keep them from suffering, before the snow could be removed."

—ELIZA M. GILL.

## THE TURELL HOUSE.

In regard to the statement in the REGISTER (Vol. XVI, page 51) that the Turell, or Jonathan Porter house was built by Mr. Turell, I wish to state that the land upon which the above-named house stood was a deed of gift from Ebenezer Nutting to his son, Jonathan Nutting. Ebenezer's estate extended along High street from Ram's Head lane (Rural avenue) to the stone wall on the westerly boundary of the Puffer estate.

The portion conveyed to Jonathan was bounded southerly on the country road (High street), seven rods easterly on a highway allowed from the country road to the several divisions of the Wade estate, northerly on a highway between said land and land then in the possession of John Albree, measuring on that line nine rods, westerly on the remaining land of Ebenezer Nutting. The lot contained two acres, and no mention of a building was made. The deed was dated March 12, 1717–8. By deed dated February 8, 1723–4, Jonathan Nutting sold to John Giles a tenement and two acres of land, and John Giles sold the estate September 22, 1725, to the Rev. Ebenezer Turell. The house was no doubt subject to many changes during its existence, but the *original* portion must have been built by Jonathan Nutting soon after the land came into his possession. The highway

on the northerly boundary was the way to John Albree's farm and mill.

In the year 1720 John Albree purchased of Percival Hall the following described estate, "Thirty-two acres of land with house and other buildings bounded westerly on land formerly of Deacon John Willis; north on woodland laid out to Major Jonathan Wade's heirs; east on land of John Bradshaw; south on land of Ebenezer Nutting, excepting one-fourth of Mill." This estate comprises a considerable portion of the "Lawrence farm" being that portion upon which the farmhouse and other buildings connected therewith are located. Marble, or Meeting-house brook runs through the southerly portion of the estate, and the mill of John Albree, weaver, must have been located upon this brook near the location of North Winthrop street (formerly Purchase street).

—JOHN H. HOOPER.

## ABOUT THE OLD MILL

"*To the Editor of the Medford Historical Register:*—

"Dear Sir: I wish to add my mite to your bit of Medford archæology, and to try to throw some light upon the remains of the old tide-mill recently discovered on the river bank a short distance below the bridge at the wears, a cut of which appears in connection with the article published in the REGISTER, Vol. XVII, No. 1. I have failed to fix upon the time when the mill was built, but will give brief abstracts of the several deeds that have from time to time conveyed the title to the mill property on the Mystic river on the Charlestown side and in the westerly portion of this city. These conveyances are not so clear as might be wished, and it is evident that some of the transactions affecting the property are not a matter of record, and further, there is not any mention of a mill on the north side of the Mystic river in any recorded deed that I have been able to find.

"The first mill constructed upon the Mystic river was

built by Thomas Broughton on land purchased of Henry Dunster on Menotomy's side (south side of river). In the year 1656 Mr. Dunster sold to Thomas Broughton 'all that parcel of land on which the corn and fulling mills stand, which the said Thomas Broughton built on Menotomie's land and in the river of Mistick . . .' In the year 1659 Thomas Broughton sold to Edward Collins 'two water mills on Mistick river now in the possession of Thomas Eames in said Broughton's behalf . . .'* In the following year (1660) Edward Collins sold to Thomas Brooks and Timothy Wheeler '400 acres of land . . . also one-fourth part of the mill on Mistick river lately in the possession of Thomas Broughton . . .' In the year 1666 Edward Collins sold to Caleb Brooks 'one-fourth part,' and to Timothy Wheeler 'three-fourths parts of the corn mills on Mistick river . . . now in the occupation and improvement of Thomas Fillebrown, and all houses, land, dams and waterways to the same pertaining or in any way appertaining or in any way belonging, also all tools and implements. . . . Excepting and only reserving my rights, interests and claims to the wares on said river for fishing, with liberty to fish as formerly has been wont in and about said mill.' In the year 1684 Timothy Wheeler sold to Ebenezer Prout 'all his right and title to the corn mills bought of Edward Collins, Thomas Danforth and Thomas Brooks.'

"A diligent search of the records fails to show any conveyance to Timothy Wheeler of the mill property except as has been before stated. It is evident, however, that Ebenezer Prout was the sole owner of all the mill property on both sides of the river, as that same year he sold to his brother, Joseph Prout, 'one-half of the corn mills at Menotomy in Charlestown on Mistick river, one-half of the mill yard on Charlestown side containing one acre. Also one-half of dwelling house and out-buildings, one-half of mill dam. Also one-half of two acres on the north side of the river at the end of the mill dam. Also one-

* There were two mills under one roof, a corn and a fulling mill.

half of one and one-half acres of upland at the end of the dam in Medford.' The dwelling house referred to was the old house that stood on the south side of the river and was torn down a few years ago when the Metropolitan Park Commission took possession of the land for a park.

"The next year (1685) Mr. Prout sold the remaining half of the above to Thomas Ward, who mortgaged the same to the said Prout, who in turn assigned the mortgage to his brother, Joseph Prout. Joseph afterward came into the possession of the whole estate. These deeds contain the first reference to lands on the north side of the river as being connected with the mill on the Charlestown side.

"In the year 1710 Joseph Prout sold to Jonathan Dunster 'mill, mill yard, buildings and orchard one acre. Also one and three-fourths acres of meadow land on the north side of the river at the end of the mill dam. Also one and one-half acres of upland on the north side of the river at the end of the *old* dam.' Here we have the first direct reference to the possible existence of two dams across the river.

"At this time it may be well to quote from the report of a committee appointed by the Court of General Sessions of the Peace 'to enquire into the convenience of the Highway and whether it is needful, referring to a County road that is needful to be laid out from Menotomy road, so across Menotomy fields, over the Ware, through Medford, to a place called Mr. Convers mills in Woburn.' July 8, 1709, the committee report 'that having visited the road leading from Menotomy to Convers mill in the township of Woburn, both in the Ancient road *where Wheeler his mill formerly stood*, and also the road leading through Adams his gate. . . . And we do judge it most convenient for the publick and least prejudicial to any private person, that said ancient road leading by said mill, cannot reasonably be made passable. . . .'

"From the foregoing it appears that Wheeler's mill had disappeared or was in a ruinous condition, and that the

road over the dam was so much out of repair that it could not reasonably be made passable without too great an expense. Now although no reference to a mill on the north side of the river is made, is it not reasonable to suppose that the mill whose remains were pictured in the REGISTER, as above referred to, was built sometime previous to the year 1709, especially as the mills on the Menotomy side of the river were out of use, according to the report of the committee above quoted.

"The estate remained in the possession of Jonathan Dunster until his death in the year 1742, when it was divided among his heirs, his daughter Elizabeth, wife of Captain Philip Carteret, receiving the westerly portion of the Medford lands. In the year 1767 Mrs. Carteret deeded all her estate in Medford to her son-in-law, William Whittemore, and her daughter Abigail, his wife, and it remained in their possession until the death of Mr. Whittemore in the year 1818, when the Medford land was set off to Moses Robbins, one of the heirs, then a minor. Moses Robbins sold in the year 1822 to Cyrus Cutter, and the land was described as follows: 'One acre of marshland, bounded southwest on Mystic river, southeast on James Cutter, northeast on Deacon John Larkin, together with all the mill privileges if there be any belonging to the said parcel of land on the north side of the river.' It is on the westerly end of this land that the remains of the old mill were found. Mr. Robbins called his meadow 'Bunker's Meadow.' Why it was so designated is a mystery, as no person by the name of Bunker ever owned the land.*

"The name of Deacon John Larkin (formerly of Charlestown) puts one in mind of the horse ridden by Paul Revere in his famous ride to Lexington on the morning of April 19, 1775. He rode Deacon Larkin's horse. These meadow lands on the north side of the river in Medford are now included in the Metropolitan Park System. "JOHN H. HOOPER."

*The meadow land known as "Bunker's Meadow" was on the south side of the river, bounded east on Alewife brook and north on Mystic river.

## MEDFORD'S LATEST WEATHER.

Unusual weather conditions have prevailed of late. The driving rain, hail and thunder storm of Wednesday (A.M.) March 18, and the brief snow storm of March 26, were marked features. At four in the latter afternoon the western sky assumed the strangest color, rivalling the "yellow day" of 1880, and soon large flakes of snow came. Within a few minutes it grew so dark, there was a general lighting up by everybody and many were deceived as to the hour, scarcely believing their trusted timepieces.

But who can describe the matchless beauty of the scene as at sunset the clouds parted, or yet in the evening that followed!

Possibly over an inch of snow had fallen, or rather come on the wings of a westerly wind.

The writer, out on an errand to Hastings Heights, was impressed with the marvelous scene. Each street was like the long nave of some vast cathedral. All the trees were covered with an immaculate foliage even to their tiniest twigs; their great boles were like marble columns on their windward sides, but dark and sombre as ever on the lee. The over-arching branches were transformed into Gothic arches filled with the most elaborate tracery sculptured in one brief hour.

Looking westward, the stone tower in the park loomed up dark and gloomy like a prison, its cap stones and iron crest all enshrouded. A walk around the park revealed it a shaft of gleaming white, broken only by the window openings and the white barred doorway.

The park was like a glimpse into fairyland; its shrubbery in fantastic forms, the varying shapes of the trees all snow laden were rivalled only by the tall white flagstaff, now a purer white, that seemed to reach the stars.

All the common and ugly looking objects for the time were beautiful. Chicken yards of wire, tennis courts and latticed trellises, all were laces of the most intricate pattern, a delight to the eye. The flashing eyes of the hurrying autos and the brilliantly lighted street cars sent

momentary gleams along the way as the trolleys hissed and burned green, while in all directions the street lamps burned steadily and made the scene one of enchantment. Next morning

> "The melting snow wreaths everywhere
> Were leaping off in showers."

As the sun was slow in breaking through the clouds, there was not the beautiful vista of the preceding evening.

At noon the snow had vanished, and at night there came another thunder storm to give variety to a peculiar March.

---

## A MEDFORD SLAVE ROLL

**(Not Called on Bunker Hill.)**

One of these names has come down to us in the petition to the General Court of "Belinda an Affrican," see REGISTER Vol. VII, p. 68; the others have been hitherto unknown to fame. It has remained for the REGISTER to make them public, after the lapse of a hundred and fifty years.

We have recently examined two leaves,* evidently from the account book of an ancient Medford cordwainer (whose identity is unknown) that gives their names. The paper is of excellent quality, yellow with age, frayed at edge, a little mutilated and the ink black as when written at dates from January 5, 1748 to April 14, 1762. One entire page (8 x 12 inches) contains forty-two charges against Thomas [torn]. Another has items charged to Simon Bradshaw, Aaron Blanchard, James Perry, "Beniamin parker" and Isaac Warren, with both pages of the other leaf filled with charges against "Cornial Isac Rial." In this we find the names of "Abrom, Jo, peter, plato, Foeby [Phœbe] Bash [Bath-sheba] Cuper, prige [?] Bilander, Cobak, Bill, Forten [Fortune]; twelve in all, in connection with shoes, "soaling and heel taping," and all names except "Bash" several times repeated.

* Papers of late Horace Hall.

Then there were "two pair for your Negro garl" and "soling your Negro garlls two"; also "two pair your Negro womun shos."

None of the charges are over six shillings, except Cooper's "soling and heeling shos 17*s* 6*d*."

Again there are charges for "soling Madam and Daughter shos."

The only item of Colonel Royall's personal use was "soling your pumps 2*s* 6*d*."

A different sort of *pump* was "mending your pump box" four pence; this time the word *mending* is used. Probably Jo, "peter, plato" and the others got water more easily from the Royall well because of this "mending" of the pump by this ancient Medford cobbler, who also mended bridle and "chaze harness" several times.

The list of Col. Royall's twelve slaves in Brooks' history gives six of these names, but does not include Belinda. Hagar, Mira, Nancy and Betsy may have been the negro woman and "garls" of the old account.

His charges for making shoes for Thomas —— "your wife and garl" was 3£ 10*s*, the largest amount entered. A pair for "calep" was 2£ 10*s*.

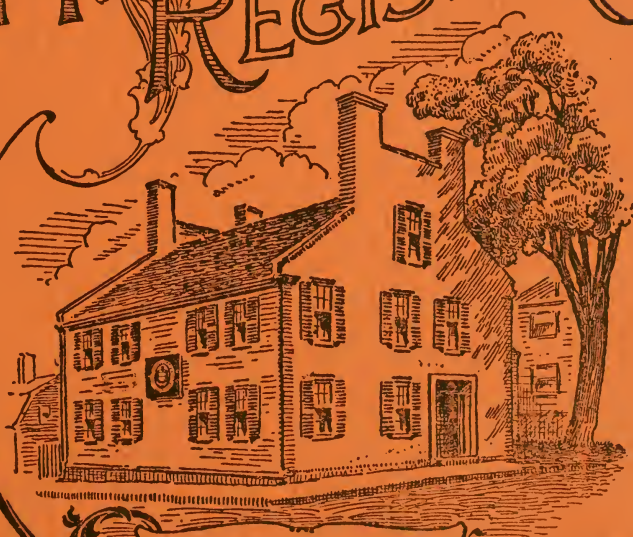
Simon Bradshaw had "a pair for yourselfe 3£ 5*s*, a pair for your Negro man 2£ 10*s*". James Perry was charged with "a pair for yourselfe, 2£ 18*s*, a pair for your woman 1£ 10*s*, a pair for your garl 1£ 4*s*," while "Beniamin parker" had for "yourselfe, wife and garl." Evidently there was a social distinction existing in Medford, shown by the terms Madam, wife, woman; daughter, girl, maid; negro woman; your son and your boy, that was recognized in this ancient Medford book keeping.

One cannot help wondering a little why Col. Royall's slaves were furnished "shos" for from 4*s* 6*d* to 6*s* 5*d*, while Simon Bradshaw's negro man's cost ten times as much and almost as much as his master's.

Altogether it is a scrap of business history that sheds light on pre-Revolutionary times.

Vol. XVII.] [No. 3.

# HISTORICAL REGISTER



JULY, 1914

PUBLISHED BY THE

MEDFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS

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### FORM OF BEQUEST.

I give and bequeath to the Medford Historical Society, in the city of Medford, Mass., the sum of _____ Dollars for the general use and purposes of said Society.

(Signed) _____


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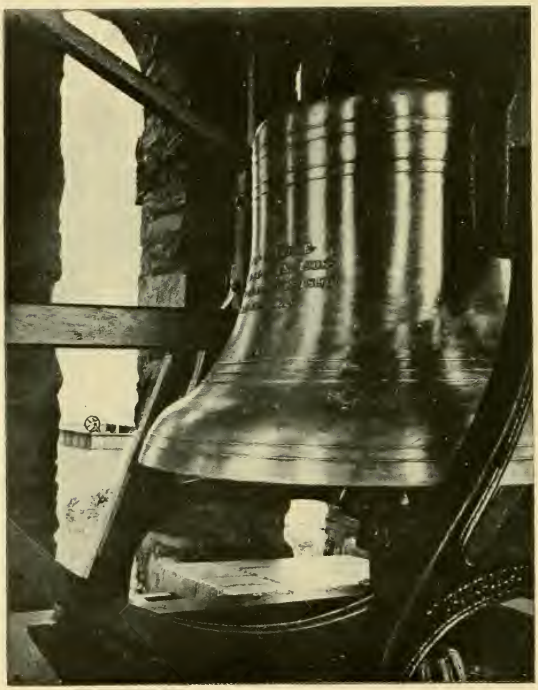

"CONCORDIA."

The new bell in the tower of Goddard Chapel at Tufts College.

The former bell, after over half a century of service, was sold to founders of the new.

# The Medford Historical Register.

VOL. XVII. JULY, 1914. No. 3.

## MEDFORD BELLS.

BY MOSES W. MANN.

[Read before the Medford Historical Society, April 20, 1914.]

THE bells of a town or city possess an interest to many youths, not outgrown in later years. Whether the bells call to school or factory, college hall or church, whether the alarm of danger, wedding chimes or the solemn knell for the dead, they bring a message, reminding of duty or business, pleasure or sorrow.

One of the pleasantest recollections of the town where my boyhood was spent is that of the ringing of the three church bells, morning, afternoon and evening on the Sabbath, and of the noon and curfew bells on week-days. I doubt not there are some in Medford that share the same experience.

With the thought of making record of those of Medford, I prepared a series of articles thereon some thirteen years since, which were published in the *Medford Mercury*, followed in later years by others, in all eleven or twelve.

The earliest record we have of any meeting-house bell in Medford is in 1740, when an effort was made to purchase "a bell that Mr. Dolbear had for sale." Mr. Dolbear was a Boston merchant at Dock square. Nothing seems to have come of this, however. Historian Brooks mentions the fact that the town had a stock of bricks, but as these were not sold the bell was not bought. He records that "some liberal gentlemen provided a bell" in 1744. The ringer was paid five pounds for a year's service. This bell was on the second meeting-house beside Marrabel's brook. The bell was placed in a turret or

cupola that surmounted the pyramidal roof, and the bell-rope hung in the middle of the house in the alley, just as it does today in the old Hingham meeting-house, built in 1681. Medford had then been settled one hundred and fourteen years, and without doubt this *first* Medford bell was brought over sea, and it may have been the one suggested four years before. Of its founder, weight and tone we know nothing. It was probably a small bell, pitched high in the musical scale, weighing but a few hundred pounds, and hung in a cumbrous wooden frame. Its sharp, clear tones were heard up and down the Mystic valley, and doubtless its warning peals rang out after Revere galloped by, one hundred and thirty-nine years ago yesterday morning, on his way to Menotomy and Lexington. But ere this the third meeting-house had been built on another spot, and the bell hung in its towering steeple.

The eighteenth century was old, its last year young (but thirteen days), when Medford people assembled for their tribute of respect to Washington, each wearing the tokens of mourning. His companion-in-arms, Gen. John Brooks, pronounced the eulogy in the black-draped meeting-house, and as the people dispersed, the bell was tolled until the sun went down.

Its echoes are more than a century old, but we of today remember the sorrowful tones of the Medford bells at the passing of President McKinley.

Fifty-eight years the *first* Medford bell was in service, and on May 10, 1802, the town voted "to have a new bell, and that the old one be given in part pay." The contract for its casting was given to Paul Revere and Sons, whose bill of $552.75 was allowed on November 1 of that year. Benjamin Reed was paid $2.50 for "bringing up the bell," and Fitch Hall, Joseph Hall and B. Farrington were paid sums aggregating $27.74 for placing it in position. Isaac Floyd was paid $15.83 for six months' ringing. On April 1, 1805, the town voted not to pay for ringing the bell *every* day.

In March meeting, 1803, the selectmen were directed to sell the old bell when they could obtain a reasonable price, and this is the last information we have of the first Medford bell.

Evidently Medford did not pay cash in those days, as on January 2, 1804, the selectmen gave an order to Revere and Sons for $31.74 interest on their bill for the bell.

In 1810 this *second* Medford bell had an associate in public service in the steeple of the third meeting-house. Hon. Peter C. Brooks presented the town a tower clock. This was accepted by the selectmen, who communicated to him the thanks of the town, entering the same on the records. Twenty-nine years the clock measured the passing hours and the bell announced them, until on May 12, 1839, Medford people, or rather the Unitarian portion, assembled for the last time in the old third meeting-house.

For six months the Revere bell remained silent and covered on the "green," while the new house of the Unitarian (First Parish) was being built. The clock received some extensive repairs, and both clock and bell were placed in the storied steeple of the new house of worship at its completion. There they remained until their destruction by fire on Sunday, January 15, 1893.

I fancy that attendants at the First Parish Church will listen with surprise to the following —

> Fragments of the metal were incorporated in the bell, cast by Henry N. Hooper & Co., hung in the tower of the new edifice built in 1894

especially as said tower does not, and never has, contained a bell. Moreover, Hooper & Co., the successors of Revere, were succeeded by others prior to 1874. Equally fallacious is this inscription, said to have been upon the bell:

> Presented to the town of Medford, Mass., by Peter Chardon Brooks as a slight token of the esteem he holds for the people among whom he was born and bred.

As a matter of fact, Mr. Brooks was born in North Yarmouth, Me.

I have quoted the above from *Revere Bells*, by Dr. Arthur H. Nichols of Boston. Dr. Nichols was grossly misinformed in the matter by a Medford man, and only learned of the error after his book had found a place in the library of the Medford Historical Society. He at once conceded the accuracy of the Medford records of selectmen and town treasurer as authority, instead of the letter received by him, which he has on file (the writer of which has passed on).

The long pastorate of Dr. David Osgood ended in 1822. Respect and love for their pastor had held the varying elements together for some years, though the parting of their ways was near.

The Methodist Episcopalians had begun to hold public worship before the separation in the First Parish took place. Soon a new house of worship was erected by the Trinitarian or Second Congregational Church for its use.

Six years later (1830) twenty-two persons contributed the sum of $640, "feeling that the cause of religion would be promoted by the placing of a bell in the tower." Thatcher Magoun and John Bishop gave $200 each, the rest was in sums of from $5 to $25, doubtless in equal proportion to the means of the donors. This bell was also cast by Revere (and was his 346th) and weighed 1,529 lbs. It cost $604.93, and the balance of $35.07 was turned into the treasury of the Second Parish, "on condition that the subscription paper be recorded in the society's book of records." This was done, and thanks given the donors. This was the *third* Medford bell.

The *fourth* bell to come to Medford was in the late '30s, and placed on a schoolhouse on Park street. This was a small one, its sound welcome to the studious, but a terror to the tardy ones. It was rung by the pupils, and Mr. Hooper recalls his juvenile experience at the bell-rope, with the only school bell the town of Medford ever bought.

Next came two other bells, at about the same time, about which we may not be exact. One was the *Old Bughorn.*

Of the significance of such a title I have failed to learn, but such was the name given to the ship-yard bell that, placed on the building of James O. Curtis, was rung at the hours of labor's commencing and close, in the days when times were busy along the Mystic river. When the ship-building business declined, the bell was disused, and for years remained silent. But, in 1877, the town built a schoolhouse near Malden line, which was called the Curtis school, and Mr. Curtis donated to it the ship-yard bell. It hangs in an iron yoke, with a solid wheel of wood for the bell-rope. The tongue of this bell is somewhat peculiar, in that it swings in all directions. This is a small bell, 14 inches high and 19 inches diameter. An ornamental design encircles its crown, and above it is the inscription, "Cast by G. L. Hanks, Cincinnati, Ohio." No mark of weight, tone, or date is discernible upon it, and its weight is probably less than 200 lbs. At present it is, and for many years it has been, the only school bell in Medford.

The other bell referred to was the depot bell. Installed, at the opening of the Medford Branch railroad, at first on a little platform at the end of the roof-ridge, it was later housed in a cupola. The old-time style of ringing was similar to that of church bells — ten or fifteen minutes before the departure of trains, the first bell; the second bell was for about three minutes, in regular strokes, ending at the scheduled time. This ringing was a convenience to the regular patrons of the road, but there were always late arrivals, and sometimes some — *too late.* After some forty years of service this bell became cracked and was removed to the railroad "graveyard," and none other ever replaced it.

The year 1854 saw the opening of Tufts College. Its first building was Ballou Hall, and upon its roof was placed the college bell, cast by G. H. Holbrook at East Medway, Mass., in 1857. The father of this foundry man learned his trade of Paul Revere. If this old bell could talk it might tell many strange stories of the pranks of

the young collegians, or perhaps something of its own history. Whether purchased by the college corporation, or the gift of some friend, may ever remain unknown. That it had a message to the students is evidenced by these words, from *Brown and the Blue:* —

> "Arouse to your waiting task, too long
> Forgot," to one came the message strong;
> To another "Today still beckons to fame,"
> His listening neighbor heard Duty's name
> And went at the work; with eyes on the ground
> The plodder knew one day more in his round;
> But the brow of his fellow grew bright at the voice,
> The chiming called him to toil of his choice.
> Clang-clang! Clang-clang!
> With mystical meaning the loud bell rang.

In the '50s there were many fires, incendiary or otherwise, in Medford, and the two church bells were in frequent service to give alarm. Whether the violent ringing cracked the Second Parish bell, no one knows. Diligent inquiry of the men of that time now living, fails to reveal why, on July 6, 1860, the Second Parish paid $463.66 for a bell, as appears in the account book of the treasurer. As the *records* of the parish are utterly silent in relation to it, the only reasonable conclusion we may arrive at is this, that after thirty years of service, the bell having been, in addition to its service in "the cause of religion," used for the daily ringing at sunrise, noon and sunset, and for many fires, had become damaged and was recast, or exchanged for another. But, two months and three days later, this new bell became itself a prey to the devouring element, the work of an incendiary.

Does any one present remember that October day in 1860, when six white horses came into town, hauling a dray, on which was mounted a bell and several men to ring it? People noticed its similarity of tone to the one on the burned church. It was a Presidential year and the occasion was a rally of the Constitutional Union Party. As darkness drew on the Everett Guards turned out in torch-light parade, with a band of music, and marched

through the streets with the bell ringing. Their campaign cry was, "*All up! All up!*" and because their candidates were John Bell and Edward Everett, this bell found place in demonstrations of the party in various towns in the Commonwealth. The men on the dray would swing the bell and shout at its *Ding-dong*, "*And Everett.*"

This bell was cast by Hooper & Co. in Boston, and bore this inscription, "Massachusetts for the Union, the Constitution and the enforcement of the laws," (fugitive slave law and all), and on the opposite side the words, "Bell & Everett, 1860."

In one of those demonstrations was a transparency that said —

> *John* is the *Bell*,
> Will toll the knell,
> Of all the hopes that *Abe* built.

A few days later the country knew that "Honest Old Abe," the rail-splitter, was elected President, and the next year found John Bell among the *enemies* of the Union.

The campaign over, the State Committee of the Union Party had the bell for sale, and it was purchased (with their insurance money) by the Trinitarian Parish, and placed in the tower of its new church on High street. The words, Bell and Everett, were chipped from it, otherwise the inscription remains. After the union of that society with the Mystic Church and the remodelling of the latter's house of worship, the bell and clock were moved thereto and still remain in service.

In June, 1873, the First Methodist Episcopal Church dedicated its new edifice. In the tower was placed a bell, cast by Hooper & Co., that weighed 1,798 lbs., receiving the impact of 40 lbs. of iron in its tongue, and was of the tone of F natural. There were no historical or sentimental associations connected with it. It was bought and paid for at the market price, in an ordinary business way. On the evening of August 19, 1905, there were three incendiary fires, and this church, with all its

contents, was destroyed. After the building by the society of its new church on Otis street, a smaller bell from the foundry of Meneely's Sons of Troy, N. Y., was placed in its tower and is now in service.

In 1888 the Union Congregational Church at South Medford had been erected. For twenty years the sharp, pertinent tones of the race-track bell had been heard by the crowds who gathered at Mystic Park. Since '88 this church bell has been true to the legend inscribed on it, "I call and I warn." It weighs 500 lbs., and it cost about $200. It was cast by the Meneelys, and was provided by the efforts, and was a gift in trust, of Prof. H. B. Doland and others. Upon the completion of the new and present church building this bell was placed in its tower.

In 1884 the West Medford Congregational Church, by persistent effort, succeeded in paying a burdensome debt, and several gentlemen, not of the church, were moved thereby to assist in the procuring of a bell therefor. It came from the Blake foundry in Boston and weighed 2,025 lbs. Instead of the society's corporate name, the inscription was "Harvard Avenue Church, West Medford, Edward C. Hood, Pastor, 1884. Hitherto the Lord hath helped us." On March 4, 1903, the church was destroyed by fire and the bell broken by its fall. To the city of Troy, N. Y., it was sent to the hotter fires of the bell foundry. After eighteen months absence it came back and was placed in the tower of the new house of worship. On one side, near the crown, is the name —

Meneely Bell Co., Troy, N. Y., 1904.

and on the opposite (eastward) —

"We went through fire and through water, but Thou broughtest us out into a wealthy place."

"Oh, come let us worship and bow down. Let us kneel before Jehovah, our Maker." — Psalms 66 : 12 ; 95 : 6. A. R. V.

Its weight is 2,200 lbs., and its first Sabbath service was in calling the people to the dedication of the new

church. The hours of the tower clock, the city's property, are also struck on this bell.

Over a century ago the New England Glass Works were established in East Cambridge. After fifty years the business had so increased as to require extensive buildings and a small army of workmen. Clocks and watches were not as numerous or as cheap then as now. For the convenience of its employees, the corporation placed on its central building, in 1854, a bell weighing 505 lbs. This was also from the Hooper foundry. Its 15-lb. tongue sent out the note of C, calling to daily toil about the glowing furnaces for years, until at last the closing out of the business left it with occupation gone. For ten years or more it hung unused and silent, till 1899. Then some one found it could be purchased for $20, and that $25 more would place it in the belfry of the Hillside Universalist Church. So, without burdensome effort, the amount was raised by subscription, and it became a Medford bell. With an honorable record behind it at the age of forty-five, it entered the service of the church, and, though with this late beginning, it is the *oldest church bell in the city.*

> "Swell, swell, ye waters, swell,
> Rang deep and strong the Baptist bell,
> While faith in God alone can save,
> Man must be plunged beneath the wave,
> To show the world enduring faith
> In what the Holy Scripture saith;
> Swell, swell, ye waters, swell,
> Rang deep and strong the Baptist bell."

On May 13, 1906, a unique service was held in the room over the carriage porch of the First Baptist Church. The Pastor read a psalm, each of the deacons offered a prayer, then the clergyman followed in one of greater length, and the roomful of people sang "All hail the power of Jesus' name." At the appointed time an experienced ringer (Mr. Peak) carefully tilted or "set" the bell, and the rope was placed in the hands of Miss Alice

Curtis by her father, with the injunction to "pull," which she did. Slowly at first, but with gathering momentum, the 2,040-lb. bell swung around, and out on the breezy morning air came its sonorous vibrations in the key of E. Mr. Curtis grasped the rope, gave a few vigorous pulls, and resigned it to the ringer to finish the duty of the time.

The brief service in the tower was a fitting prelude to the morning worship and dedication of the "Curtis Memorial Bell," which came from Meneely's foundry and bears the inscription —

Presented to the
First Baptist Church, Medford,
by Elisha B. Curtis,
1906
In memory of
His Father, Asa F. Curtis,
His Mother, Achsah L. Curtis,
His Sister, Mary Curtis Breed,
His Wife, Lucia Leadbetter Curtis.

The destruction of the Methodist bell in the preceding year and rebuilding farther away by that society, with a different hour of service in the Mystic Church, suggested the need of a bell in the Baptist tower, and after some consideration of the matter, Mr. Curtis felt, "It's up to me to provide the bell." It is safe to say that no bell ever placed on a Medford meeting-house was ever accorded such a reception, both adverse and kindly, as was this. After a time the city clock was arranged to strike each hour on this memorial bell.

The city's bells are mainly those of the fire-alarm service. The one longest in use is that hanging in the graceful tower of the brick fire station on Salem, near Park street. It was purchased in 1856 (to replace the school bell destroyed by fire), but placed instead on the engine house of Washington (No. 3) Engine. Hooper & Co. furnished it at a cost of $238.42, and for sixteen years it was Medford's only fire-alarm bell. When the new house was built the bell was divested of its hangings

and suspended from a beam in the tower, from which it sends out its warning tones simultaneously with all the others. When this bell was *first* hung, the *first* steam fire engine had just been built and was looked upon with little favor by the volunteer firemen of those days.

The next fire bell to come was the one at West Medford. This weighed 515 lbs., and was mounted on a temporary framework beside the livery stable of D. K. Richardson near Whitmore brook. At the completion of the fire station on Canal street it was placed in its cupola. Complaint was soon made by firemen who didn't hear its ringing, and the engineers procured a larger bell of 900 lbs., and had the cupola roof raised higher to take it in. William Blake, successor of Hooper & Co., took the first in exchange therefor, and the town paid a small charge for damage to its wheel. When installed it was hung in the usual way for ringing, but when removed a year since to the new station on Harvard avenue, was suspended from a steel beam in the cupola of the building.

The newest bells are those on the stations on Spring and Medford streets, these weighing 1,800 and 2,000 lbs. respectively. The former (at Glenwood) was purchased in 1890 at a total cost for bell and striker of $833.43. The latter bell cost $385.23, with $450 for the striking apparatus and setting the same. Both these bells hang suspended by the crown, and though supplied with the usual tongue, are struck by a hammer on the outer surface of the rim by electric action. Unlike all others, they bear the trade-mark of the foundry (a miniature bell on which is the name Hooper) and over which is a wavy ribbon with the words, Blake Bell Co.

The bell in the Central station is the heaviest in the service (and in the city as well), weighs 2,485 lbs., of the key of D sharp, and was purchased by the Town of Medford, on the recommendation of the engineers, as a measure of *economy*. Despite the condition upon which the town supplied the tower clock, in 1870, to the Second Parish Church on High street, which was, that the free use of

the bell thereon should be granted for public ringing, the town had paid for its use, after its removal to its present location, more than enough to buy a bell.

The bell at South Medford has this inscription, "City of Medford Fire Department, Arthur C. Symmes, Chief Engineer, 1894," but the Central bell has none to denote municipal ownership, but around the crown, "Cast by William Blake & Co., formerly H. N. Hooper & Co., Boston, Mass., A.D. 1891." Within a few years it has been suspended as are the others, higher in the tower, but at first was mounted in the usual way, and until the custom was discontinued, was rung at stated hours daily, and also as the curfew bell.

All the city bells above enumerated are struck by the electric-alarm system (installed in 1880), as is also the steam gong or whistle upon the Schenk-Adams factory at the western border of the city and within a few feet of the Somerville *appendix*.

To the *writer* five blows followed by one, and to *others*, numbers contiguous, come the sound of these fire bells with a thrill, lest the destroying element threaten his own or a neighbor's dwelling. More pleasant is their sound to the school children on a stormy day, while the test strokes at noon and evening arouse no fears.

At Wellington, upon Bethany Church, is a small bell, placed there at the city's expense for a no-school signal. It is not connected with the fire-alarm system, orders for its ringing being given by telephone. In return for its housing, the church society has the use of it on Sabbath days.

In the cupola of the stable at the superintendent's residence, Oak Grove Cemetery, hangs a small bell for a call bell. It was purchased from a junk dealer in Boston, who knew nothing of its history, but who said it was perhaps a ship's bell. Possibly it may have been one of *Butler's bells*, but this is only a surmise. At the capture of New Orleans, there were found a lot of bells of various sizes that had come from churches, schools, plantations,

and wherever a bell could be had. They were all donated to the lost cause by a sacrificing people, to be cast into Confederate cannon, but had not reached the foundry fires. These bells were sent north by General Butler and sold, and various town and church committees secured bargains thereby. For several years one interested made inquiry and search therefor, and after a long time succeeded in locating a few of "Butler's bells." Another bell of municipal ownership is the "Town of Medford Bell." This hangs in the belfry of Grace Church, and by the appropriation * of $600, by vote in town meeting.

Question was raised at the time as to whether or not the town could legally do so, and the legal opinion gotten was, that it would be legal if the bell could be used for fire-alarm or other public service authorized by the town authorities. Of this bell more definite information will appear elsewhere.

As there entered into the possibility of purchase of a first Medford bell the item of bricks, it is fitting to mention the bell upon the boarding-house of the New England Brick Company at Glenwood. At various intervals in the brick-making season it used to wake the workmen and call them to their meals, and mark the hours of working time. It is the only existing Medford bell that the writer has not seen and examined at close range. It has been strenuous work, in some cases, to climb the church steeples and fire towers, but facts absolute and correct are only to be had by painstaking search.

Medford may have had, in the old days, a town-crier. If so, he must have carried a bell — small, of course, and possibly larger than those the schoolma'ams used to shake at the open window, but we have found no trace of one.

Mention has already been made of the college bell. What disposition was made of it we know not, but on June 11, 1908, the class of '98 presented the college with a new bell, placing it in the lofty stone tower of Goddard

* The town had appropriated a like sum five times for clocks on other churches.

Chapel. It can be heard far and near because of its high elevation, and when its *long continued* ringing is heard, be sure that in some athletic contest the Tufts boys have won. At its installation elaborate services of dedication were held in the chapel. The college magazine * says of it —

> Professor Lewis grasped the dramatic possibilities of a dedicatory service in which the bell itself should play a speaking part.

The program began with an invocation, and the class song was sung by Frank Lincoln Pierce, who sang it on the '98 Class Day. The president of the class, John Albert Cousins, next presented the bell, which was accepted by President Hamilton. The ode was by Clara Ransom of '98, for Tufts was then co-educational. Passages from Schiller's "Lay of the Bell" were next sung, and at the words, "She is moving, sways, sways," the first stroke of the bell was given by the college president. Then followed the

> Act of Dedication — To Prayer, to Mourning, to Work, to Jubilation, and as the Voice of Alma Mater

by the president. At each pronouncement there was response by the choir and *bell*. During all the exercises the audience had been seated. It now arose and joined in singing a stanza of the college song, pausing before the final sentence, when the pealing of the bell was heard. We were somewhat startled a few months ago on reading in the morning paper that this bell had fallen "to the stone floor of the chapel," owing to the vigorous ringing of the Jackson College *girls*, in jubilation about Tufts' victory over Bowdoin in the foot-ball game. But like other newspaper reports, a slight accident was much overdrawn. The girls had two strings to their bow, *i.e.*, the bell rope and the cord of the tolling hammer, and the two do not work properly together.

The composition of this bell is seventy-eight per cent. Lake Superior copper and twenty-two per cent. imported

* *The Graduate*, from which information is gathered.

tin. It weighs 1,011 lbs., is 116 inches in circumference at the sound bow, and its medium tone is A. The inscription cast upon the bell is —

TUFTS COLLEGE
GIVEN IN JUNE, 1908
BY THE CLASS OF 1898
PAX-ET-LUX

The dedication, in which over thirty persons took part, is commemorated by a bronze tablet set in the outer doorway of the chapel tower. All the other bells we have mentioned were, and are, of a similar composition of copper and tin, known as bell metal, which has an intrinsic value, and a bell of such metal, if cracked or broken, can be recast.

The *latest* Medford bell, rung for the first time on Easter Sunday (this year), is in the tower of the Hillside People's Church (Methodist Episcopal). It is from the foundry of the Cincinnati Bell Company (Blymyer & Co.), and weighs 550 lbs. Of what it is made, or the percentage of its component metals we are unaware. We climbed into the belfry on Easter morning to examine it, and listened as it was rung by the sexton. Its tone is unlike any others in the city, and it is probably what is commonly called a "steel bell," but unlike those we have heard elsewhere, this has a pleasing tone. It is a gift to the church by the children of the Junior League, who held, on last Wednesday evening, a dedication service.

Some one, a few years since (and not far away) said "A bell is a relic of a barbaric age." Be that as it may, bells have been used in "the cause of religion" ever since they were placed in the hem of the robe of Aaron, the first Jewish high priest. The tinkling of those little golden bells gave to the people assurance that the high priest, alone in the presence of Jehovah, still lived and moved, and that the divine favor was still theirs.

The skill of the artisan has been employed in all lands, and in some the results have been most gratifying. In old England, in the great cathedral churches, were peals

and chimes of bells, and the ringing of them became an art. After the settlement of New England the bell on the meeting-house became a necessity, though preceded by the drum-beat, or blast upon a conch shell.

The first chime, or "ring of bells," was that on old Christ Church in Boston, cast by Rudhall of Gloucester, England, and still in use.

Whatever I have said, or may say, on the subject of bells (Medford's or others) is on the historical line, and not from any musical knowledge.

I have purposely delayed mentioning the excellent chime of nine bells of Grace Church until now. In 1873 municipal appropriation, parish work, individual or memorial liberality, provided for its expense, which was $2,700. These nine bells have an aggregate weight of 5,324 lbs. and are attuned to the key of G, that of the largest, or tenor bell. Each bears the inscription "Grace Church, Medford, A.D. 1873," and all were cast by William Blake & Co.

A visit to the belfry reveals an oaken frame some eight feet square and four feet high. Within this frame, suspended at their crowns, are eight of the bells, while upon its top is mounted, in the usual manner for ringing, the "town," or largest bell.

In addition to that before mentioned, each bell has cast upon it its name and an appropriate inscription, scriptural or otherwise, as follows: —

No. 1. Tenor, 1,383 pounds. G.

TOWN OF MEDFORD BELL.

"Except the Lord keep the city the watchman waketh but in vain." Psalms cxvii, 7.

No. 2. 988 pounds. A.

RECTOR'S BELL.

"Whose soever sins ye remit they are remitted unto them, and whose soever sins ye retain they are retained." St. John xx, 23.

No. 3. 725 pounds. B.

MARRIAGE BELL.

Presented by DUDLEY C. HALL.

"What therefore God hath joined together let not man put asunder." St. Mark x, 9.

No. 4. 637 pounds. C.

HOLY COMMUNION BELL.

"He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him." St. John vi, 5-6.

No. 5. 425 pounds. D.

HOLY BAPTISM BELL.

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Galatians iii, 27.

Presented by MRS. DUDLEY HALL.

"Peace to the past, joy to the present, welcome to the future."

No. 6. 371 pounds. E.

CHILDREN'S BELL.

"Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God." St. Mark x, 14.

No. 7. 296 pounds. F.

BURIAL BELL.

Presented by MRS. GORHAM BROOKS AND FAMILY.

"Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." Revelation xiv, 13.

No. 8. 217 pounds. F sharp.

CHRISTMAS BELL.

In Memoriam. Presented by JOSEPH K. MANNING.

"Glory to God in the highest; and on earth peace, good will toward men." St. Luke ii, 14.

No. 9. 192 pounds. G.

EASTER BELL.

In Memoriam. Presented by THE CHILDREN OF MARGARET B. BUSS.

"Those who sleep in Jesus shall God bring with him."
1 Thessalonians iv, 14.

Just beneath the belfry is the ringing chamber, containing the frame and ropes by which the bells are rung, or rather chimed, the distinction being in the manner of operation.

In the great cathedral churches of England and the continent, with their lofty towers and heavy bells, bell ringing was (and still is) an art requiring much practice and no little skill, as well as strength. There the services of a ringer for each bell are required, and the finest results obtained, as the overtones of the bells from lofty heights are thrown out more fully into the air. It will

be readily seen that with a ringer to each bell of a chime of twelve or sixteen, the service became that of an organized and drilled company, with reserves to depend upon. By the way the Grace Church bells are hung and chimed *one* person, with the music score before him, performs the work. Two upright posts upon the floor, and two crossbars between them, through which the ropes are strung, an attachment for maintaining the proper tensions, together with angle cranks, complete the simple apparatus. With a firm grasp and a quick horizontal pull upon the proper ropes (attached to the bell tongues) the player renders the various airs of his repertory.

Excellent as is this chime, and beautiful as is the architectural design of Grace Church, it is to be regretted that these bells are so near the ground, and below the steep roof of the edifice. Were they in a campanile, like that of Goddard Chapel, at Tufts College (even though not on a hill), their tones might, like the

> —— "bells of Shandon
> Sound so grand on
> The pleasant waters of the river" — Mystic,

and be more plainly heard, and to a greater distance, than they are.

The knells for the dead are tolled on the tenor bell by a muffled hammer, upon the approach of a funeral cortege, otherwise the full chime is used, as the varied music demands. It is said that their first use was on a wedding occasion. The names of the various players are to me unknown, save that on the occasion of my visit of inspection Mr. Clarence Bearse was thus serving. During their forty years of use the work must have been performed by several others whose service deserves recognition.

In all there have been thirty-six Medford bells, of which number twenty-seven are now in service.

The ancient custom of tolling the bell to announce a death in the town (a different number of strokes for a man, woman or child, followed by the number of their

years) has long since ceased. Rarely is any bell tolled as the dead are borne to the silent city. The daily ringing at seven, twelve, one and six o'clock has passed away, but it would be well to re-establish the curfew bell at nine as of old. The fire alarm is more efficient than the old way, and we question whether the bell ropes left exposed outside the meeting-house doors would be left undisturbed by the youth of today as of old.

One hundred and seventy years have the Medford bells been ringing. The quiet town of 1744 has grown to the city beautiful of 1914. Instead of the one meeting-house by the brook and the little schoolhouse near by, are the many and expensive ones, the latter daily thronged with the children of today.

Well would it be if on every schoolhouse there was a bell, and rung as of old. Well if in *every* church tower, in the various sections of the city, there were bells of such size and tone that in sweet harmony the old-time Sabbath custom might be resumed. But may such Medford bells as there are, whether they chime in ivy-mantled tower, or elsewhere singly,

"Ring out their cheerful, earnest chime
And bid each gathering throng
In hallowed walls keep holy time,
With heartfelt praise and song.

"Ring out and let their joyful peal
Resound afar and near,
Let old and young from hill and vale
Devoutly worship here.

"Ring out ye bells with joyful tale
Far over lake and lea,
Make glad our lovely native vale
As it was wont to be."

## MEDFORD SMELTS AND SMELT BROOKS.

THE REGISTER's editor recently received an appreciative letter containing inquiries which suggest two of our following articles. Our correspondent, a former Medford boy, writes "I was familiar with [Meeting-house] brook in 1840. It was a capital smelt brook, and we caught many in our hands." In another letter he says, "I used to catch smelts in Whitmore brook."

Another and older Medford boy, Caleb Swan, has left the following written record of December, 1855:—

Meeting-house brook rises north of Mr. Dudley Hall's land, and east of Mr. Swan's woods called Ram-head. It runs through Mr. Peter C. Hall's farm, and through Mr. Swan's meadow, and unites with the creek from the river by the old meeting-house lot owned by Mr. Swan. In April, immense numbers of smelts come up from the river and creek into the brook. They are taken in scoop-nets by the boys, early in the morning, in great quantities. They are a very sweet and delicious fish, [of] long slender shape and bright silvery sides; 6 to 8 inches long, and 6 to 10 weigh a pound. . . .

Dr. Swan wrote B. L. S.,* April 23, 1855—

Over 5 Bushels were taken today in the brook in your meadow.

And on April 10, 1856, Dr. Swan wrote to his brother Caleb—

Timothy Swan caught a good mess of smelts last night; he says they have come quite plenty.

Mr. Caleb Swan, living in New York, made note thus, January 31, 1863:—

Some very *small* smelts are now brought to market in New York; they are sold to French restaurants. I had a *pound* of them counted this morning by James, my fishman, and there were 55 smelts.

Historian Brooks also modestly mentions another Medford boy who caught smelts in these same brooks, in the same primitive fashion first named.

Those fifty-five-to-a-pound smelts of the New York market were doubtless degenerate in Mr. Swan's estimation, as the "brother doctor's" letters from Medford stirred the memories of boyhood days.

* His brother, Benjamin L. Swan, of Oyster Bay, N. Y.

Though smelts have in recent years been seen in Whitmore brook, it is unlikely that they have come up stream since the building of the Cradock dam. Since the denuding of the hill slopes around Bear meadow, Whitmore brook has shrunk noticeably, and for several summers failed entirely in its lower reach. Should our correspondent, the Medford boy of 1840, visit his early haunts he would find Meeting-house brook but little changed, but Whitmore brook at its best he would not recognize. The city has put some fifteen rods of it below High street in a strait-jacket of concrete. The old wooden bridge and the ford-way for watering horses is gone, and a stone bridge is beneath the street. House foundations border it, and ever and anon it disappears beneath other streets and front-door yards, while in the Playstead it is spanned by several bridges of rubble stone and concrete. "Art and man's device" have there done much to beautify its course, but what it needs most is water.

Different conditions exist along Meeting-house brook, though its head waters of 1840 have long since been diverted by the south dam of the Winchester Water Works. From thence to within sight of Winthrop street it flows through woodland, and a stroll along its winding course will reveal "a beautiful spot" our correspondent refers to. Medford people will do well to become better acquainted with its sylvan retreats.

---

LOST,

A Medford mill site, formerly occupied by one John Albree, a weaver, who bought land in Medford in 1720. Was seen near "Mr. Noah Johnson's" in 1855. The water supply was small, and failing, the mill fell into disuse. Any information relative to the same will be thankfully received by the editor.

WANTED,

Some one to "write up the story of the Frenchman's mill," whose location was at the "Bower." Inquiry has

been made therefor by a former resident of Medford, and a paper containing facts will be welcome at the REGISTER office.

STRAYED OR STOLEN,

A Medford streamlet known as Whitmore brook. Its usual course lay between Bear meadow and Mystic river. For the last few years it has had times of disappearance; is said to have been abducted by the market farmers, or stolen by the gypsy moth. Any one restoring the same will be gratefully remembered.

WANTED,

Some one with "civic pride," public spirit or private munificence, to "plant a hogshead of acorns" at the "Rocks" and on the bare hillsides, as was suggested by Rev. Charles Brooks sixty years ago. Any person doing thus may become a benefactor, and add to the beauty of Medford, as well as conserve its water courses.

INFORMATION WANTED,

In relation to a *silver mine*, said to have been opened in Medford at about 1880.

Also, some facts regarding the Medford Salt Marsh Corporation of 1803, its promoters and purposes. Address the editor.

LOST,

On the bank of Mystic River, about six years ago, a swimming place known as "Second beach." When last seen it was near the railroad embankment. Its restoration would be appreciated by Medford boys.

FOUND,

Between Auburn street and the railroad, a stagnant pool of dirty water, said to be the remains of Mystic river. The owner (unknown) will receive the congratulations of the public on proving property and paying the amount needful for filling same and abating the existing nuisance. The same was created by the Metropolitan Park Commission by uncompleted work.

## OUR YEAR'S WORK.

THE season of 1913–14 has been unusual, in that the February meeting was omitted on account of a very severe snow-storm. Other meetings have taken place at the regular time. At the annual one in January, for the election of officers, no paper was given. At this time, and also at the opening and closing meetings, light refreshments were served, and social intercourse added to the pleasures of the evening as the various papers were discussed informally by little groups, and friend met friend with happy reminiscences.

Our own members or townsmen have served the Society by giving papers, and only twice have people outside of Medford been called upon for this purpose, and one of these is a member of this Society.

This is proof enough that there are a faithful few in Medford, loyal to their home town, and ready always to give of their time, strength and talents for the preservation of our local history, and for the entertainment of their auditors or readers.

October 20 we were indebted to Rosewell B. Lawrence for the charming account of his summer in Great Britain. He had many varied and pleasant experiences, of which he spoke informally in detail, and so shared with eager listeners his privilege of travelling. All enjoyed the accounts of visits to land of Dickens and trips to quaint London inns, and the recital of a canoe trip on the Thames.

November 17 John Albree of Swampscott, our out-of-town member and the enthusiastic secretary of the New England Historic Genealogical Society, gave a most interesting paper upon "Books and Other Things." He illustrated the address by exhibiting a collection of books selected at random from his own library, valuable for historic interest, or as models of the bookmakers' art.

December 15 Rev. Frank I. Paradise of Grace Church, Medford, gave a happy, informal talk (illustrated with maps and pictures) on "Switzerland; A Model Democracy."

March 16 Mrs. Ruth Dame–Coolidge graciously enter-

tained our Society with a paper on the "Rise of the Gothic Cathedral." It was a scholarly piece of work, given without manuscript, and held her hearers with strong interest.

April 20 Moses W. Mann, who has given of himself so much to our Society, and is the indefatigable editor of the REGISTER, read a paper on "Medford Bells," some thirty-six in all, containing, as all his papers do, a fund of information. Mr. Elisha B. Curtis and others gave personal reminiscences on the subject, and also of the Medford family noted for their skill in ringing bells and entertaining exhibitions of the same.

May 18 Charles Edward Mann, President of the Malden Historical Society, gave an informal talk on Sam Walter Foss as he knew him in early life, when both were beginning on journalistic careers and undertaking literary work. This interchange of courtesies with our neighbors is a happy phrase of our work.

Mrs. Augusta A. Brigham, now of Malden, formerly of Medford, a member of this Society, gave a paper before the New England Historic Genealogical Society this season, and she acquitted herself so creditably that we feel honored by the work she has done. Her subject was "The Massacre at Lancaster," the story of the captivity of Mrs. Mary Rowlandson.

At each meeting of the Bay State Historical League one or more of our members have served as delegates.

ELIZA M. GILL, *Secretary.*

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# HISTORICAL REGISTER

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I give and bequeath to the Medford Historical Society, in the city of Medford, Mass., the sum of _____ Dollars for the general use and purposes of said Society.

(Signed) _____


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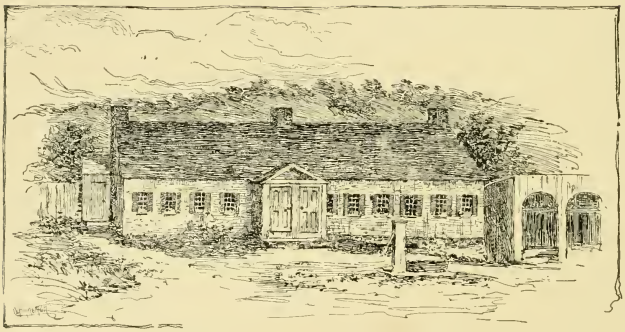

THE OLD BRICK SCHOOLHOUSE.

Francis A. Wait.

J. Everett Wellington.

# The Medford Historical Register.

Vol. XVII. OCTOBER, 1914. No. 4.

## AN OLD MEDFORD SCHOOL BOY'S REMINISCENCES.

By Thomas M. Stetson, New Bedford, Massachusetts.

Editor of The Register:

You invite reminiscences of the long ago, when your city was, over seventy years since, a little town with only three or four populous streets; reminiscences of its all important river, of boyish sports in woods and waters, of the vanished canal and especially concerning the territory west of the Smelt brook. You style it the Meeting-house brook, and as both smelts and meeting-house have long since disappeared into the limbo of the lost, perhaps your title is the better.

I ought to know that territory, as I was born in 1830 at the Captain Stickney house on High street at the summit of Marm Simonds hill. My earliest pants were made by Miss Nabby, daughter of Marm. I learned to swim at the end of Rock Hill lane. This was prior to the advent of Mr. Hastings, and my first school was kept by Miss Lydia Symmes.

The Stickney house was later the scene of the charming hospitality of the Misses Elizabeth and Lucy Ann Brooks, sisters of the historian of Medford. Next east stood the ancient homestead of their father Mr. Jonathan Brooks, with its great sycamore trees in front; next farther east was the house where Miss Lyddy lived with her brother Octave. Between her house and the Simonds house lived Noah Johnson. This hill was altogether the best coasting place in Medford, and the Smelt brook to the east of it the best boy fishing place before the diversion of its sources to Winchester reservoir.

Nearly opposite the Stickney house stood an old house at the corner of the lane, where a Mr. Staniels lived at about 1835. He moved to the top of Winter Hill where he built a showy house very near the fork where Governor Edward Everett once lived and where about two centuries earlier Governor John Winthrop built his cementless stone house. The Mystic region has been a good place for Governors, for we may count Governor Cradock and Governor John Brooks and Governor Everett again. Late in life he lived on the west side of Mystic upper lake. To Mr. Staniels, succeeded on Simonds hill Mr. William Russell and his son Frank. These were accomplished gentlemen and carried on in Boston a noted Academy of elocution.

Miss Lyddy Symmes' school did not inculcate the higher branches. It was a sort of parents' assistant. There were a dozen or two of us pupils, all tots. I could not have been four. No desk, table, nor even chair was provided for me. I had only a cubical block of wood (say nine inches) known as the chimney corner seat. She was very good and gentle, and we expected to sit in her lap when she told us about our alphabet. The alphabet class had three in it, and as she made the letter's sound and we repeated, it was all so funny that the rest of the school would laugh, and Miss Lyddy would laugh, and we would laugh, and all was merry. Her teaching was personally conducted. She was not the Medford girl who marked off an inch of alphabet in an infant's primer and told him to take his seat and learn that far. No punishments were feared in Miss Lyddy's school. She did not deem us victims or culprits, but "little dears." She did not give us examination but instruction. I was sorry to leave her, and have never heard of her since.

My next teacher was Miss Foster who kept a private school in the basement of Rev. Abijah R. Baker's church (Orthodox) on High street. She was also good to us, and had a fine set of blocks with which we played a

great deal in school hours and so were less uneasy. These blocks were everything to us. They were our reward of virtue and our safeguard against sin, our "path, motive, guide, original and end." In short, I remember little else about the curriculum in Miss Foster's school. The outside was fine. A high paling protected us from the river, and we could play all round the church and over the pleasant open slope which extended westward as far as the lot on which Mr. David P. Kimball, a Boston merchant, built his home, the home later of Dr. C. V. Bemis. Mr. Kimball was the brother of Moses Kimball of the Boston Museum, and father of D. P. Kimball, Jr., a schoolmate of mine.

Next came Miss Harmon's school. This was in the southeast room of the old fort on Governor's lane. The pupils were a size larger. I was about five, and recall the awe with which we contemplated the two oldest; one was Oliver Wellington, aged ten, and the other was Everett his brother, aged nine. They came from the Wellington farm on the east frontier of the town. Our playground was in the lane and in Mr. Dudley Hall's great barn which stood high up to the westward.

I was next sent to my first public school, not a grammar school. I think it was called a preparatory. It was on the east side of Back street, which perhaps is now styled Union street. On the east the yard was fenced off from the branch canal which brought timber to the river from the Middlesex canal at a point near the Columbian hotel. On the south the yard had no fence except the side of a linseed oil factory, owned by Henry Stearns, brother of Major George L. Stearns. This mill was an instance of abominable heedlessness. Instead of delivering its escaping steam into the upper air by a high chimney, it actually delivered it into the school yard through a level pipe on the ground. The steam was hot, and very hot at the end of the level pipe, and poured out into a flock of forty or fifty little people who knew no better than to dare each other to go into

it. I, being the youngest and the most heedless, went the farthest and was suddenly struck down. At first my life was despaired of, and I was under medical treatment for weeks. I never went to the Back street school again. Fancy such a playground equipment as that steam pipe now.

Later I entered the grammar school in the rear of the Unitarian church on High street. Among the schoolmasters were Mr. Foster, Mr. Gilman and Mr. Tweed, later Professor Tweed of Tufts College. Here I first saw the hard realities of New England instruction. These masters were neither kind nor cruel, just the ordinary style of an ill-paid schoolmaster in a low grade school, and some of the pupils were very big, strong and unruly. Corporal punishment was needed, or thought to be needed, very frequently indeed. Sometimes a very big boy would fight against it, but he never was quite big enough. Andrew Wade was the biggest in school. He was a man grown and was about nineteen years old, not troublesome nor noisy, but deficient. In fact he was underwitted, but we did not know it. He would sit for hours staring at his book, but ideas did not come to his poor brain. He could not learn and had to take the consequences, viz., heavy blows across the shoulders from the master's ferule. He would keep his seat, roaring with pain, and the girls would be teary and shuddery and sometimes make little screams. It was all very horrid indeed. The masters were no worse than usual. It was the so-called method of education in the grammar schools. I remember nothing of the sort in the high school in the east end of the same building. We had a fine large yard between the school and the old church which stood well south and paralleled the schoolhouse. Our sports on it were foot-ball, tag, prisoners' base, etc., with excursions over the west fence into Squire Abner Bartlett's artichoke patch, and over the east fence into the orchard of the Misses Osgood; but at last the terrible Miss Lucy Osgood caught little Gorham Train who

was rather slow in his return trip over that fence, and so our apple hooking came to an end. I can hear even now the lofty eloquence worthy of Antigone or Electra, with which Miss Lucy condemned Gorham's trespass.

I can fix a date at which I was in the grammar school. In 1839 I saw the old church pulled down, and a picture of it in my possession bears that date of its destruction. It had a high pointed spire above its open belfry. At the belfry, carpenters sawed the upright posts through, and by a rope attached high above, the crowd below pulled and swayed. The spire trembled, tottered and fell with a loud crash. The great brazen rooster left its pintle, flew its first and last flight and fell at the feet of Sam Swan, who captured it and carried it home. Where is that bird now? It ought to be in the headquarters of the Historical Society. Sam was the son of Mrs. Peggy Swan who lived in the west half of the Bartlett house. Maybe some Swan may know of it.

Our first teacher in the high school was Mr. Forbes, a good teacher and man. The next was Isaac Ames, the best teacher I ever knew. He was a small man with a club foot, a student at law, and in after life Judge of Probate for Essex County. He was thoroughly amiable and no trouble ever arose in his school. He instructed three of us in Latin and Greek. He did not insist on absolute quiet, and allowed whispering. If the hum was too great he would gently request silence, and always got it. When he forgot to ask for it, old Galen James of the school committee who was often present, would call out in his deep voice, "Oyez, oyez." We did not know what Mr. James meant, and perhaps he did not either, but it sounded sympathetic and so we became quieter. The high school numbered far more girls than boys. I remember well Rebecca, Chastina, Garaphylia and Esmeralda, the four pretty daughters of Isaac Sprague, a leading ship builder; Caroline Blake, daughter of Oliver Blake, a dry goods merchant; Maria Fuller, daughter of George Fuller, a ship builder of South street; Harriet

Stetson, daughter of Jotham Stetson, another ship builder on the same street; Mary Peck and Lucy Peck, daughters of Thos. R. Peck of the hat factory, all nice girls, but I fear none remain to hear me say so.

As the high school did not fit for college James Hervey, Albert F. Sawyer and myself left it about 1843 for the private academy of Mr. Day on Forest street, successor to John Angier. He gave us good instruction, but his school was very small and could not give us the habit of forceful recital and expression which the great Boston Latin school gave its pupils. However, we all got into Harvard (1845), but were for a time astonished and handicapped by the nerve of the little chaps from the Latin school.

Other schools need noting, where we were taught dancing, singing and drawing, all by private tutors. Mrs. Barrymore came out weekly from Boston to teach a class in dancing in the Day Academy. To it came Helen Porter from the George Porter house across Forest street; Catherine and Rebecca Adams, daughters of Deacon Adams, came from the slope of Winter Hill; Susan Emily Porter came from the Royall farm. She was our best dancer. She later married Mr. Cunningham of Baltimore. Amelia and Caroline Blanchard, daughters of Capt. Andrew Blanchard, came from the house shown on the outside of the HISTORICAL REGISTER; Apphia and Mary Fuller, daughters of Dr. Fuller, from the next house east.

The drawing class was instructed by Miss Hannah Swan, daughter of Mrs. Peggy Swan and sister of Sam, he of the brazen rooster.

The singing school was a large affair. It was kept in the Martin Burrage house opposite the Unitarian church. It was attended by many of the Bradbury school girls from across the river. The teacher was Mrs. Peak, wife of our organist and a fine singer. Often in church, she as the soprano and her brother-in-law Horatio, barytone, would sing gloriously Bowring's Antiphonal

"Watchman tell us of the night
What its signs of promise are?"

Later the whole family, including my schoolmate "Bill" Peak, were really famous all over New England as the travelling "Peak family."

But I must come to our lovely river with its sinuous and graceful course and its bright water, especially bright at flood tide. At low tide it was less so, but twice a day the salt sea water came sweeping by, bringing the real sea air into the town, and in springtides covering the wide marshes. Can it be more beautiful now that it is above the Cradock bridge an artificial basin? But I do not know it now. The great marshes had their beauty even if the grass was salt grass. The old bathing places must be altered now.

The lowest bathing place used to be Blanchard's wharf opposite the Lawrence distillery. This was probably the most valuable wharf in Medford. It had no beach, of course, but there were generally log rafts which sufficed. Crowds of boys came here to bathe at high water, for no well conditioned Medford boy would ever bathe except at the top of the flood. Besides the ordinary water borne freight to Medford, this great wharf had a monopoly of the inward molasses bound to the distillery, and of the outward bound rum. Great casks lay everywhere, almost hissing in the sun heat, and as the molasses casks came without any bungs, its odor went to the skies almost as rummy as the rum itself. The boys did not like it, but the old salts did. Later it had a far reaching effect upon an infant industry started by Mr. Peter C. Brooks a mile and a half off at the extreme western edge of the town. He secured a lot of bees and decided to make his own honey. All went well till a far-roving bee of his happened upon Blanchard's wharf. He knew that the world had nothing better for him, and he lit. He stowed a full freight, went home, and next morning returned with all his sisters, his cousins and his aunts. All loaded, and the same thing went on till the

time for the honey crop arrived and Mr. Brooks then found his honey combs stuffed with rum and molasses. He was furious. He was said to be the wealthiest man in New England, but he could not control this situation.

You will not expect me to expatiate on the merits and glories of old Medford rum. Both Daniel and his younger brother Sam Lawrence were schoolmates of mine, but they were too young to give us any of it. Its fame reached far and wide. It was known where the township was not known. When the Reverend Mr. Learoyd left his Medford parish to join one in Taunton, at the installation feast he spoke of the joy he anticipated in his new connection, but when he added "my affections will for a long time be with old Medford" a titter rippled along the tables of the banqueters.

The last time I saw Mr. Brooks was on High street. Between the parsonage of my father and the tan yard was an orchard, lower than the street and with no road into it. A man named Tufts owned it. He had got his hay cart down to the street wall and had laboriously forked into it his crop of orchard grass over the wall, but there was an upward slope to the roadway, very rough, and the horse could not stir the load. So the usual method for boys and horses was adopted, and he began a long and most cruel beating of the animal. The small boys about, who always were the Greek chorus to any Medford event, were very angry and were about stoning Tufts, till one suggested that we should probably hit the horse. Just then appeared on the north side of the street near the house where Cleopas Johnson once lived, a rather short, elderly gentleman. He was dressed all in black with short breeches, black silk stockings, buckled shoes and carried a cane. At once he came across the street, went straight to Tufts and said clearly and loudly: "If you strike that horse another blow I'll prosecute you." Tufts stopped, raised the whip, and we thought trouble was coming. If Tufts had struck Mr. Brooks every boy would have let fly his stone. But the king of the Bos-

ton marine underwriters did not scare worth a cent, though the brute was twice his size and not half his age. So Tufts muttered some words, and Mr. Brooks resumed his march westward.

This very region was a lively place in winter. The canal was frozen and the Lowell railroad had not quite begun service, so enormous four horse sleds brought through High street high piled heavy cloth boxes from Lowell to Boston. There was a sloping entrance into the Magoun estate (now the Public Library). This slope extended much into the street and the great sleds would skid southward and bring up against the posts and trees of the parsonage sidewalk. Sometimes two or three were thus wrecked at once. Their high speed began at the Unitarian church, and continued down the hill as far as the orchard. Once I saw one of the big sleds going down at high speed, with a horse towed behind the sled by a halter buckled to his head. The sled passed safely by Mr. Magoun's slope, but the horse did not. He lost his footing and was dragged past the Johnson house by the head. I expected to see his head pulled off. The driver did not know what was up, or rather what was down, till the yells of the chorus made him stop. But the snow was smooth and icy, the original impetus had been useful, and I saw the horse get up with rather a puzzled look, and presently the whole outfit went on to Boston. There was danger in those great swift sleds. Right at this orchard one of them struck a school girl I knew and killed her. I think her name was Edgerly. I saw the blood spatters on the burdocks and rubbish between the road and the orchard wall.

The next bathing place was on the north end of the mead-ford. It was a poor place. It was central, and so far as I remember, had no other *raison d'etre*. But between it and High street was a building that deserves mention.

This was John Howe's trunk store. In its rear, looking down on the bathing place, was his workroom where

he utilized his boxes, leather and brass tacks. In the front was a large airy room with some finished goods in it, and an assortment of loafers. It was so convenient that when a Whig headquarters was wanted in 1840, for a presidential campaign, all eyes turned to Howe's front room and he let the Whigs have it. They fitted it up grandly. At least we boys thought so. Pictures of General Harrison, of Tippecanoe and Tyler too, log cabins and hard cider barrels galore hung on the walls, also others ridiculing Matty Van Buren and his Kinderhook cabbages, etc., etc. The secretary of the club was Charles Hall, chosen unanimously, and to be in charge of the place all the time until election. He was a hero in Medford politics, an old bachelor, well dressed, one of the prominent Hall family, deemed himself a ladies' man and had a tremendous voice and good arguments, too. He was *vox et præterea* both. All day long debates went on there, for the Van Buren men came in and talked and the Whigs hoped to convert them. Charles was up in the whole story of "protection to American industry," and having the best arguments and best voice he was always supreme — always but once, and I must tell of that, for soon all the elusive memories of my old acquaintances will vanish. One day he had triumphantly conducted a long discussion in the trunk store, talked his leading opponent nearly blind, when an illogical Democrat sprang to his feet and shouted: "Well, anyhow, I was in Dudley Hall's yesterday. There were some girls there and one of them looked out of the window and said, "There goes *old* Charley Hall." The shot told. Charles collapsed, and even the Whigs were pleased, for Charles talked too much.

The next bathing place was a little stone wharf at the fork of the meeting-house creek, way out in the marsh, and hence private enough. I never knew by whom or why it was built, perhaps for the transit of salt hay, but it had no deck and no roadway. The boys liked it. Maybe it is visible now. If not it may be submerged in

artificial flood waters. Perhaps Winthrop street is on top of it.

The last and best bathing place of all was at Rock hill. This was an ideal spot. No house was about. The fine grassy hill sloped south to a great rock which seemed to deflect the current eighty or ninety degrees. At full sea there was plenty of water for diving off the rock. All about was nice short grass, and near by bushes and trees for a dressing room. Across the Mystic on its opposite bank was a very heavy growth of the tuneful sedge which sounds up so musically in the hands, or rather in the mouths, of a lot of small boys. Two or three rods eastward was a beach, just the place for little boys to learn how to swim. How came this beach there? Our mudbanked river did not have natural beaches. Some said this beach told of the historic *Blessing of the Bay*, and certainly it did look as if scarped out for the launching ways of a vessel. Some said it was the place the early Woburn settlers came to for free alewives. To be sure there was a bigger fishery at the outlet of Mystic lake, but our ancestors did not like paying royalties to Cradock and Winthrop grantees of the upper privilege. Some said this beach was made to help the Woburn people move their water freight to and from Boston through the very direct line of Rock Hill lane and Woburn street northwestward. I cannot answer. "*Non nostrum tantas componere lites.*

An enormous blue pearmain tree stood near this beach and we kept good run of its noble fruit. After Mr. Hastings came, it was on his land, but he was a good soul and never bothered the boys. I should like one of those great apples now.

Perhaps all this beautiful scene is now spoiled by the dam below or by the great sewer construction. I have not seen it for sixty years.

Boating on the river was good. Captain King, who originally lived in the house later of Major Geo. L. Stearns, moved to a house near the river a little off South

street, and set up a fine able boat. She was schooner rigged, a style best for shortening sail in our twisting river. His son George, a schoolmate of mine, was the skipper and would often take the little fellows aboard and go as far as Malden bridge where we caught big fish. Sometimes he would go up into the lower lake, though he disliked the trouble of passing under the canal aqueduct and the Weir bridge. But it all ended when George King went to sea, and later became a shipmaster himself, and then I built a boat of my own when I was about fourteen. She was a sort of flat bottomed scow but had a keel fastened on. A rake tail served as a mast. The sail was a sprit sail, easily twisted round the mast and the sprit, and she had no boom. She would go pretty fast especially with a skipper who made friends with the strong tides, and I had no trouble in getting by the aqueduct and Weir bridge. I often took her into the pond, a beautiful lake with heavy woodlands along its shore and some very high grounds by it. Two points ran out into the lake and (except for about seven feet) nearly met. This was the "parting of the ponds," the extreme westerly point of the grant to Governor Cradock of 1635. The water rushed swiftly through the strait referred to; bushes and trees grew on the two points and very large trees on the high eastern point. Generally a plank served as a crossing over the runway. The whole place was delightful prior to the Charlestown Water Works dam. At this runway I could catch white perch in the swift water. This was a sea-going fish but never caught in the river. He had come all the way from Boston in the salt stream, then the length of the brackish lower lake, and here he got his first taste of the fresh water he had come for.

One word of parting is due to the Parting of the Ponds which no one will ever see again in its pristine beauty. It was a notable spot. Nothing more beautiful was within the perimeter of the first governor's grant. It was his furthest point, as if he had stretched out his

primal choice to secure this spot. It was called the Parting, but it was also the meeting of the waters, in fact of two water systems. To this point came the tidal influence of the salt Atlantic, but never beyond. Its anadromous fishes, however, went further. From above came the rainfall of the whole Aberjona water shed and its great state ponds — Horn, Wedge, etc. The fresh water went on southward but its fishes did not enter the brackish south lake. I never knew of any such there except an occasional clumsy sucker who knew no better and came down from Lexington sometimes as far as Sucker hole at the south side of Weir bridge.

My little boat often took me the whole length of the Menotomy river, clear up to the Concord turnpike and the outlet of Fresh pond, but the scenery in this region was inferior to that of the upper Mystic. I used to note a large, black old house apparently rising out of the salt marsh west of the Menotomy and south of the Mystic, but I never until lately knew it had been the home of Henry Dunster, the first president of Harvard.

In winter our river was of no use to the boys or anybody except the eel-spearers. It never froze smoothly and the current was deep and dangerous. Everywhere on both shores there was a space of a rod or more of floating ice masses and sludge difficult and dangerous to cross.

The Middlesex canal in winter was very unlike the river. There was no danger in its currentless four foot water; no unfrozen margin. It always froze smooth and early, so that we were sure of skating on Thanksgiving day. It was the scene of glorious shindies between the Medford maggots and the Charlestown pigs. We never went far into Charlestown as the pigs would at once appear in countless numbers, but when they undertook an invasion of Medford their numbers would be less, and some stout fellows from the shipyards, etc., would join us and help with snow balls, ice chunks and fists. Joe Revaleon, a young colored man, always helped. He could

not hit with a snow ball but his fists were very efficient. But Joe won no glory for he was so much bigger than the pigs. Roars of "take one of your size" always greeted his appearance, but never made him blush. Our true hero was a high school boy named Bela Cushing, whose size was more correct. Bela was our bravest on the field and also our best on the rhetorical platform. I don't believe Cola di Rienzi ever addressed the Romans with more "bir and smeddum" (as Galt the Scotch novelist called it) than did Bela when he poured out Rienzi's words from our school rostrum. I wish I knew of his later life. These fights were really quite serious, and we who were too small to be on the fighting line could shout well and could make more noise than any Greek chorus ever made. Once we corralled a squad of pigs in the upper story of Mr. Peck's hat factory and held them there till we wanted supper, not quite daring to charge up the staircase. This war between these two towns was a strange thing. It was ancient, historic, legendary. No feud ever existed between Medford and Woburn.

West of Main street the winter canal was nicer. It generally was in sight of the river and, for a long stretch, of the Walnut tree hill on which no Tufts College or anything else stood, though I seem to remember the lone walnut tree. Beyond the aqueduct and through the woodlands it was ideal. The heavy oaks kept off the wind. We could look down upon the lovely lake which at times was very near the canal and perhaps twenty feet lower. We could climb down the slope and explore on our skates all its nooks and bays. Some distance above the "parting" there was an apron of plank, the wasteway for the surplus water of the canal. This made a handsome cascade as the water tumbled over the rocks right into the upper pond. Further northwest and nearly up to the Aberjona were two great ice houses very well located, with one end projecting into the lake for the inward coming ice blocks and the other end a little over the canal to send the outgoing ice crop by the cheapest possible freight service to Boston.

In summer the canal was delightful also. No place could be more beautiful than the mile or two of its passage through the lake woodlands. The great boats never charged us passage money and at every bridge one could step on or off a boat. Cleopatra's barge may have had silkier awnings and downier cushions, but it did not have a motion more swanlike. With the eyes shut you could not say there was any motion. The boatmen never bothered us. They had little to do but to talk. Theirs was in general an easy service. The long tow had the horse at one end, and the other was made fast to the top of a slightly elastic pole which stood near but not quite at the middle of the boat's length. Its exact position was scientifically important, for if it was rightly placed the boat would keep the middle of the water, and only at approaching a bridge or another boat did the boatman need to lean against his enormous steering oar.

The fishing in the canal must be noticed. Pickerel were there, and the troller had an easy time loafing along the tow path from which he could cover all the water. Smaller fish were numerous at certain spots, notably at the Lowell railroad bridge which crossed the canal near the arch over the river. Here were bream, perch, shiners, etc., but no pouts. The pouts were about ten feet south of the canal in a little pond at the angle of the railroad and canal, and there they were plenty.

Another good place for float-fishing for small fish was just above the lock at the aqueduct in front of the station house. This spot had a fine prospect to the west and south. To the right the sloping expanse of the green meadow stretched away to the head waters of the Mystic. There were no houses or obstructions to the view. To the left one's vision ranged for miles up the marshes of the Menotomy, and no house stood there except the black spooky old Dunster house fast sinking into ruin and decay. I liked this spot with the operating lock and the life about the *station house, and went there often.

*The tavern or canal house at the canal's landing No. 4, now corner of Boston avenue and Arlington street.

One day a gruesome event happened. I was walking south on Canal street and met a boy who told me something which sent me at once to the basement of the town almshouse which then stood between Canal street and the Lowell railroad. I found a dismal cell, lighted only by one small barred window, and by a feed hole about as large as a brick, in the heavy plank door. Inside was a fixed bunk but no bedding. There was not an article of furniture. The whole place was unutterably foul. And there, howling and roaring, was my old schoolmate Andrew Wade, now a raving maniac. At the grammar school a harmless idiot, neglect and bad treatment had brought him to this. The Medford authorities were not, I think, to be especially blamed, for this sort of thing was then universal. There were no state lunatic asylums. The system of kindness and some simple instruction for the insane was not heard of. It was not supposed that a crazy man had any rights, tastes, capacities for enjoyment or preference between comfort and misery, pain or pleasure. And so this dreadful punishment befell this poor wretch whose only crime was his incapacity for crime. I do not know Andrew's pedigree. Perhaps he derived from leading citizens of Medford. We know that Jonathan Wade who died in 1689 was the largest land holder in the township. What a trist ending was this. I could not bear it long, and said goodbye to Andrew, but he did not know me.

The Lowell railroad crossed Canal street at grade. I remember there was no gate or flagman there, also that the sleepers were of very heavy split granite. We boys used to figure on the number of them necessary to reach from Boston to Lowell. These stone sleepers did not stay long. They were too noisy and unyielding and later gave place to wood. I recall also the preposterous gates at the West Medford railroad crossing. There were two of them, not a bit like the familiar turnpike toll bar but made of heavy planking, box construction and much iron work, and when swung across the rails,

looked as if intended to stay a locomotive. When not swung across the rails they swung across the street. One night, perhaps no train was expected or the station master was sleeping, the gates were left across the track. A high northerly gale sprung up and started an empty gravel car which was standing on a siding, and down it came as if shot from a catapult, and so ended the box gates.

The pleasantest and most productive of the fishing places was at and near Mr. Brooks' granite arch. I hear the beautiful thing has been destroyed. I am very sorry. I do not believe any parkway or house construction can rival the original beauty of that region with its mile of forest arcade, its mighty oaks with their luxurious greenery and the outlook over the shining pond below the winding canal. The arch was perfect in its absolute simplicity. A gravel path from the Brooks mansion led over it and onward along the west bank of the canal to the nearest part of the lake where was Mr. Brooks' grove extending from the canal to the lake, full of similar trees of great size, and with pretty paths and two little stone arches over a bit of a brook which flowed down to the lake. We did not fish in the canal beyond this, but the cool shadow of the granite arch, where no sun ray ever came, was with the adjoining tree shadows, a favorite home of many kinds of fish. Besides the striped perch and bream, we there took cheven, a rather larger fish, all silver and resembling a scup, suckers large enough if not very good, and chub. This last had large silver scales with a sort of purple iridescence, and would sometimes weigh a pound. They were very good eating, too. Another beautiful fish was found at this bridge and only here. It was about as large as a small smelt, silvery but with crimson tipped fins and tail.

There was one more fishing place at the west edge of Medford, or maybe just over the edge. It was Bacon's pond in the Aberjona. Deacon Samuel Train, who lived next west of Mrs. Peggy Swan, was of very solemn

aspect. He was not so portentously solemn as the Rev. Orin Fowler of Fall River, of whom after one of his pastoral visits a tot of a girl said, "Mama, was that Dod?" but he was very grave indeed. He was, however, kindly inside, liked boys and fishing, both very good symptoms in an elderly gentleman. He would come from Boston as the sun began to decline and the best fishing hour to approach, have his wagon hitched up to his quick trotter, get in front with his great pickerel rod, put Gorham, his youngest son, and myself in behind with our perch rods and worms, and whirl away to Bacon's pond just west of Symmes' corner. While Mr. Train was hitching the horse, jointing up and getting his fishing tackle in order, we boys, who could act quickly, were catching him shiners for bait. He then took the east side of the pond where the water was shallow, where the long grass and the rushes, weeds and lily pads grew, and where the pickerel lay, and began his trolling. We took the road causeway and the railroad embankment. Results were good. Small fish were plenty and the deacon would get pickerel often over two pounds in weight.

But this retrospect is growing too long, especially as those who might sympathize with it have departed. Charles II. apologized for his unconscionable slowness in dying, and I feel that an apology for the unconscionable length of this prattle is due you from

Yours sincerely,

THOS. M. STETSON.

New Bedford, July 27, 1914.

We regret our inability to present to our readers a likeness of Mr. Stetson, with those of his contemporaries like him interested in the Historical Society's work. Thanks are due him for his letters appreciative of the REGISTER, and for the many side lights on our local history contained in his interesting reminiscences.

—EDITOR.

## A BLOODLESS BATTLE IN MEDFORD.

In the days of the old militia musters some were held in Medford, and on one occasion (about 1830) occurred an action of which we find mention in the account written by W. R. Cutter. The Washington Light Infantry of Woburn was chartered July 5, 1823. Their uniform of the time was very showy — blue coat with narrow skirts trimmed with gold lace, white pants, and leather bell-topped hats surmounted with black plumes twenty-two inches long. This latter would seem to outdo the present style affected by the ladies of today, and afforded an easy mark. But we will let Historian Cutter of Woburn tell the story:—

> At one of the musters which the company attended, almost a fight occurred, but no blood was shed, however. The muster was at Medford, near the residence of George Adams. For the better accomplishment of the rather difficult feat of forming a straight line, a furrow was plowed, and this furrow marked the place where each regiment was to stand. One of the evolutions was to march on to field, firing and take up their position. The regiment was at that time commanded by Col. William Winn. Twice as the infantry came up they found it occupied by another company. The captain complained to the colonel, who told him to order his company to load with blank cartridges and when they came upon the line if they found the company there to shoot the plumes off their caps, and then charge them. The company marched around, and their rival was in their place. 'Aim high, shoot nothing but the plume,' said the colonel, and they did aim high, and at the word of command blazed away with such effect that only three plumes remained; they then charged on the enemy and carried the position at the point of the bayonet. That company did not trouble the Washingtons afterward.

The scene of this muster was the Adams farm on Main street, in later years the site of Mystic park, and also for a time, at the beginning of the Civil War, an encampment or rendezvous of early Massachusetts volunteers. Doubtless on the occasion referred to there was a large gathering from all the countryside, but it could not have equalled the number that attended in the early '70s the New England Fair or the horse races there held.

Today the locality from Tufts square to Sayso road (whatever the latter may mean) is occupied by stores and a Medford population of ever-increasing density. The modern pavement has taken the place of the plowed furrow.

## DEACON'S DEMIJOHN DESTROYED.

We have been asked to insert "some funny stories" relative of course to Medford or her people. In Vol. II. p. 167 of the REGISTER is a memoir of Deacon Samuel Train, the man of "solemn aspect" mentioned in this issue by Mr. Stetson. It contains a story of the accidental breaking of a demijohn of choice whiskey just presented him. A large one too, as according to the deacon's statement, the whiskey for *ten feet around was six inches deep*, and his clothes smelt so strong that his daughter thought he was intoxicated.

Caleb Swan made note of another occurence in which the deacon met his match, and records that the deacon (probably proud of his smart grandson) told Mrs. Peggy Swan that he shouted up the stairway to the boy, "Keep still or I'll come and cut your liver out," and then the boy replied, "What will you do with it, grandpa, — cook it for breakfast?" Of course it must be understood that such were the whimsical exaggerations and expressions of a good and worthy man; habits fixed perhaps before acquiring the solemn aspect which was only external, as Mr. Stetson says he was "kindly inside."

## MEDFORD STEAMBOAT DAYS.

By Moses Whitcher Mann.

THE sails of Medford built ships have whitened every sea, but today not one remains in service. We know of but one (possibly two) which were propelled by steam; but these received their engines elsewhere, and never plied on our river. From time to time the tug-boats have come up the Mystic, towing the coal or lumber laden

CANAL AQUEDUCT AT MEDFORD, AND STEAMBOAT "MERRIMACK" (THE THIRD IN MASSACHUSETTS WATERS), 1818.

vessels, or assisted at launchings. One even came as far as Auburn street in 1874, towing scows from East Boston with lumber for the earlier houses of Boston avenue, and this was the last to come above Cradock bridge.

But these are not the boats or days of our composite subject, for while the latter part may doubtless be plural the former must ever remain singular — and the circumstances attending them equally *singular*. Medford's first historian makes no mention thereof. He was then pastor of a Hingham church and was instrumental in securing, for a time, the coming of the second steamboat in Boston bay to that place in 1818.

It may seem incredible today that a steamboat should traverse the entire length of Medford territory (greater then than now) without floating in either the river or the lake, itself but the third in Massachusetts waters, and prior to the second in Boston bay.

But such was the case nearly a hundred years ago, though today no trace of water remains in its course of nearly five miles through old Medford town. Only one year earlier (July 27, 1817) had steam navigation from Boston to Salem made beginning, and proving a failure financially, the *Massachusetts* was sold, and on the way to Mobile was wrecked. Neither this first, nor the second and smaller steamboat called the *Eagle*, were built in the old Bay State. The latter made some trips in the summer of 1818 from New Bedford to Nantucket without financial success, and then came to Salem on September 15. The *Eagle* remained there two days and went presumably to Boston with but *two* passengers. The following year she made a few trips to Hingham (as alluded to) and in two succeeding years ran to Nahant, Marblehead and Salem, when she was sold and broken up. The *Eagle* was smaller than the first, being a little over ninety feet long and less than nineteen feet wide.*

We now come to Medford's early steamboat days and the third steamboat, the *Merrimack*, Captain John L.

*See Essex Historical Collections, July, 1914.

Sullivan, that ran on the *inland route* and made a continuous voyage treble the length of those of the *Massachusetts* and *Eagle*. She was a still smaller craft, less than a dozen feet wide and fifty or sixty feet long, and of light draught, owing to the physical limitation of her route, the fresh shallow water of the Middlesex canal and the Merrimack river. The former had been in operation but fifteen years, and as yet had paid no dividends, when the steamboat *Merrimack* first ploughed its placid waters.

With a steam service from Boston to Salem and Newburyport, and the Merrimack river navigable to Haverhill, the canal's interests would be endangered, and its enterprising manager set about their defense. A steamboat line on the inland route would open the Merrimack valley direct to Boston, as locks just constructed made navigation possible to New Hampshire's capital. At that time Lowell and Lawrence were not on the map at all.

But how do we know this? Some fifteen years since a Medford man,* (now an octogenarian) said: "My grandfather told me that they used to run steamboats on the canal." As his grandfather, Joseph Wyatt, was a master mechanic on the canal in 1827, the story was the more interesting and credible.

For a time persistent inquiry among the aged people long resident along the old canal, failed to throw light on the subject. An allusion in Amory's *Life of Governor Sullivan* "to many judicious inventions" by the canal manager (the governor's son), led to further search in Boston Public Library. There we found his printed statements of the same, and also that he had acquired a water power in Medford and had begun to build steam engines for use on the canal. This was on the Aberjona river, a quarter of a mile up from the aqueduct that carried the canal over that stream.†

Mr. Sullivan's steamboat *Merrimack* was of the type

*Wm. J. Cheney.

†This water power was destroyed by the explosion of a keg of powder beneath the dam in 1865, at the instance of the Charlestown Water Board.

of canal boat then in use. He already had some unsatisfactory experience with "a heavy engine from Philadelphia" and had acquired the patent of Samuel Morey's "revolving engine." It was one of this type that propelled this third Massachusetts steamboat through Medford at a time *before* steam service was established in Boston harbor or but one steamboat had ever been seen there. It is also interesting to note that Morey's patent was signed by the first president, George Washington.

A model of Morey's first engine is now at the University of Vermont at Burlington. In the absence of drawings or illustrations it is difficult to explain its operation, but Morey's engine successfully propelled a boat *against* the current of the Connecticut near his home, *fourteen years before* Fulton (who had invented no engine) made *continuously* successful use of steam as motive power on the Hudson.

There is a certain fascination in the gleaming steel and rhythmic stroke of a modern steamboat engine; but here was one of a century long gone, when the age of steam was just beginning, designed by a man of the backwoods who had little education or mechanical training; an engine of complicated parts and crude workmanship, which accomplished its purpose, and which (we are told) contained some of the features of the modern cycle motor.

It was fitly named "revolving engine," for the vital parts, i. e., the cylinder, piston, cross-head and the frame enclosing them, rotated around a common center shaft which was geared to that of the paddle wheel. The latter was, as Mr. Sullivan said, "within the stern" of the boat. The low-pressure boiler (condensing the exhaust steam) was fourteen feet long, and contained the furnace in which wood was burnt, supplemented with a stream of tar injected therein.

Our search among the aged people was at last rewarded. We had several interviews with one we had long known, at that time over ninety years of age and

in possession of her faculties, and her testimony is entirely credible.* She distinctly recalled the passing of this steamboat through the deep cut of the canal just beside her father's house, and *spoke particularly of the noise and smoke it made.* The latter was doubtless resultant upon the tar burning fixture alluded to. Probably at our interview (in 1900) she was (in that locality) the only witness of the scene then living.

Some years later it was our good fortune to find in an English work on the steam engine, an illustrated description of *one American* — the Morey — engine, such as propelled the *Merrimack* through Medford and up to Concord, N. H. the following year.

At that time Mr. Sullivan kept a journal of his cruise which is as follows:

June 13. In the evening set off from Canal Head, Chelmsford, with two boats in tow.

June 14. Overtook a loaded boat and took her in tow.

June 15. Monday at 9 o'clock arrived at Concord, distance 50 miles: passing 21 locks and 3 canals.

June 16. Went with loading to the Upper Landing, 6 miles, in 1 hour 3 minutes, unloaded and returned in 38 minutes.

June 17. *Afternoon* 5 o'clock. Went up river 7 miles, in 1 hour 15 min., 23 members of General Court on board.

June 18. *Morning.* Went up river 7½ miles in 1 hour 8 min., 32 passengers on board.

*Afternoon.* Went up 8 miles with 157 passengers and a band of music, in two boats in tow.

June 19. *Morning.* Towed a loaded boat to the upper landing 6 miles, 20 members on board, unloaded and returned with 91 passengers.

*Afternoon.* Went up and down the river with two boats with awnings, the Governor and Council and other gentlemen on board, in all 211 passengers.

June 21. Towed Capt. Merrill to the upper landing: loaded and towed him to Turkey Falls, 15 miles: got back at 12 o'clock.

June 22. At 5 in the morning took a party of members up and down the river 7 miles.

*Afternoon.* Took a party of 215 on board with music.

June 23. Left Concord with two loaded boats in tow.

June 24. Arrived at Head of Middlesex.

*Mrs. Harriet (Wright) Smith, Woburn.

The three "loaded boats" towed up stream carried thirteen tons each. Justly proud of his achievement, Captain Sullivan wrote the following letter to the Boston *Advertiser*:

MR. HALE: The progress of the art of steam navigation is so interesting to our country that I need not apologize for sending you the enclosed extract from the journal of the *Merrimack*, at the commencement of the regular application of the power on the canal. This boat is of the form and size used on the canals, provided with a single engine of the revolving kind, similar to that in use at the glass factory * at Lechmere Point. She is propelled by a wheel of peculiar construction, placed at and within the stern. The engine and boiler occupy about one-half the boat. She works under all the disadvantages of novelty. Previously to the commencement of this trip, she towed loaded boats up river, against freshet, two and four at a time, faster than they could have been impelled by muscular labor in low water, and at a time when they could not have proceeded otherwise. The object is to give to the canal and navigation the degree of regularity and despatch alone wanting to turn the whole course of transportation from Boston in that direction upon the canal.

JNO L. SULLIVAN.

June 27, 1819.

The *Massachusetts* was built at Philadelphia, the *Eagle* at Norwich, Conn., but the *Merrimack* was built somewhere along the course of the canal — *not impossibly* at Medford. As yet we have submitted no proof that she came to Medford, but we consider that the following is conclusive. The books of record, accounts and papers of the canal company are preserved in the county offices at Cambridge. Search in the carefully audited bills of 1818, reveals one of William Phipps for services rendered and date of each entered. He seems to have been a general utility man, as his services were with parties of "ladies," "the cadets," "cleaning the boat," &c., &c. One item under date of August 11, 1818, at once fixed our attention. It is this: "1 day to Medford with steamboat, $1.50." The bill bears the check mark of examination and was duly paid. Thus it appears that the little steamboat *Merrimack* has the unique distinction of steaming through Medford waters on August 11, 1818,

*New England Glass Works, East Cambridge.

one month and six days before the *Eagle*, (which was but little larger) made her first appearance in Boston harbor.

Through this little old town of barely 1400 people with its ship building industry but a few years in progress, close beside, and never far from, but *over* and *across* our tidal river, beside our beautiful lake and through the enchanting woodlands that bordered it, *to* but not into the smaller river then within our bounds, came the precursor of the modern tow-boat, at that time the *only* steamboat plying in the waters of the old Bay State.

The query will be raised, Why was *not* this apparently successful navigation of canal and river continued? for had it been, the successful rival, the railroad, had not gained so easy a victory. The answer may be found, partly in the natural conditions then existing and partly in the financial. The Merrimack river, with its many rocks and the sunken logs of the lumber drives, all difficult to remove, was a continual menace; while the artificial banks of the canal were ever in danger from the surging wash created by the boat's paddle wheel. The latter had caused a similar disaster in Scotland in earlier years. With continued repairs at heavy expense, the enterprise had as yet yielded no return on the investment, but rather, assessment of the stockholders. While the New Hampshire legislators and others of those Captain Sullivan treated to a free excursion enjoyed the same, it requires dollars to finance a project and dynamite to remove obstructions. The former were not forthcoming and the latter then unknown. Under more favorable circumstances Captain Sullivan's dream of river navigation might have been realized.

## MEDFORD'S NAMESAKES.

It has been the purpose of the REGISTER to furnish its readers authentic information as to the other Medfords of our country, fourteen in all. To compass this we addressed, on February 3 last, to the town or city clerk of each, a letter of inquiry. All had our address on the

cover, contained stamps for reply, and were written in uniform text. They especially enquired as to the naming of the place, and stated that such historical article as might be prepared would (when published) be sent to the replying informants. These letters also stated that, through the REGISTER's exchange list and the various libraries into which it goes, the various Medfords might be better known. Of these *fourteen* places, but *five* have been heard from, and but one letter returned undelivered. We are thus sure that the other eight must have reached some municipal officer who took no interest in the matter, and failed to make reply that would have cost only the effort of writing. These were in Arkansas, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, New York, North Dakota and Tennessee; that unclaimed and returned, from Indiana; and the replies from Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Oregon, Maryland and Maine (in the order named).

We regret that we have learned nothing from a majority of the younger Medfords, and so shall be unable to carry out our perhaps too ambitious plan; also, that in the brief space *now* available we cannot do justice to those who did reply.

Clerk T. G. Jeffers of Wisconsin, a man past fourscore, says those Medfordites are German, Swiss, Scandinavian, Bohemian, Poles (in order named), a dairying and stock-raising people along with their lumbering and tanning industries. He was the second to reply, and is "proud to be a Yankee whose ancestors in this country date back to 1635." His Medford is the county seat, has 2,000 people (14,000 in county), an $85,000 court house, $65,000 high school, four ward schools, eight churches, a Carnegie library coming, and two weekly newspapers (one German). The soil is a clay loam, highly productive and well watered by the various streams, in which are plenty of game fish. This Medford got its name by the loyalty to New England of the Wisconsin Central Railroad manager in 1873. He was Charles R. Colby from Boston, and gave the various stations names of Massachusetts towns — Medford, Chelsea, Auburndale, and others.

Another Medford is, as Clerk Bigelow writes, "back in the Maine woods;" was incorporated in 1824 as Kilmarnock (the birthplace in Scotland of an early settler's father), and changed, by petition of citizens, to Medford in 1856. Water power is abundant (more than is utilized), lumbering and farming the chief occupation of its 300 people. It has one church, Free-will Baptist, is on the Piscataquis river, and reached from Bangor. Mr. Bigelow sent an excellent historical sketch of his town that exhibits his interest in our plan.

. . . . . .

Medford, Maryland, was a railroad station, originally called *Medwood*. When it came to have a post office it was discovered that one named Medwood already existed, and so its name was changed to Medford—as a compromise.

. . . . . .

Medford, Indiana, is a little hamlet (around a railway station) of some fifty inhabitants. Its affairs are cared for by the county.

. . . . . .

Medford, Oklahoma (the first to reply) has not as yet sent the information gathered, probably waiting to ascertain why it was so named.

. . . . . .

Medford, Oregon, is an enterprising city of 10,000 inhabitants, as evidenced by the literature we have in hand from its mayor, Mahlon Purdin, Esq., who writes that the name was selected by some one from Medford, Massachusetts, in 1885. A finely illustrated book of fifty pages, issued by its Commercial Club, and a copy of a special issue of thirty-six pages of its daily paper, gives evidence of the public and business buildings, its broad and lighted streets, and its various industries, notably fruit growing.

. . . . . .

We regret greatly that *our present space and opportunity* forbid further elaboration of this subject.

THE

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MEDFORD, MASS.

MEDFORD

J. C. MILLER, JR., PRINTER

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**FORM OF BEQUEST.**

I give and bequeath to the Medford Historical Society, in the city of Medford, Mass., the sum of_____Dollars for the general use and purposes of said Society.

(Signed)_____


J. C. MILLER, JR., PRINTER, MEDFORD.

AARON K. HATHAWAY

BRIDGE OVER MIDDLESEX CANAL IN BROOKS ESTATE,
WEST MEDFORD
1820–1911

# The Medford Historical Register.

VOL. XVIII. JANUARY, 1915. No. 1.

## AN OLD-TIME PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOL TEACHER OF MEDFORD, MASSACHUSETTS.

[Read before the Medford Historical Society, January 18, 1915.]

BY JOHN H. HOOPER.

AARON KIMBALL HATHAWAY, born in Grafton, Mass., December 21, 1809. Married August 29, 1836, Mary Ann Hale, daughter of Deacon Daniel Hale of Byfield Parish (now South Byfield), Newbury, Mass. He was fitted for college at Dummer Academy, South Byfield, and entered Dartmouth College, where he remained one year, then went to Amherst College and graduated in the year 1836. He became principal of Warren Academy in Woburn, Mass., and remained there until the year 1842, when he went to North Carolina for his health, where he remained about one year. On his return he came to Medford and taught the West Grammar School, then located in the old brick schoolhouse on the rear of the Unitarian Church lot on High street. (The high school was also in the same building.) His connection with this school commenced in August, 1843, and terminated in the year 1846. During his term of service the school was transferred into the new high and grammar schoolhouse on High street. This house was three stories in height and stood with its gable end towards the street. The lower story was of brick and was divided by a partition from front to back. It was opened half an hour or so before school in the morning for the accommodation of the pupils; in cold weather it was heated, and was much appreciated by the pupils, especially those who came from a distance. It was used as a play-room in rainy weather and as a lunch-room by those pupils who brought their lunches.

The west side was for the use of the grammar school, which occupied the second story, and the east side for the use of the high school, which occupied the third story. A board fence six feet in height separated the school yard from the street. An incident occurred while Mr. Hathaway taught in the old schoolhouse that is worth relating. One of the party slogans in use during the Presidential campaign of the year 1844 was "No Protection." At that time some of the larger boys of the high school were inclined to annoy the smaller boys of the grammar school. On one occasion Mr. Hathaway interfered to protect his pupils, and informed the high school boys that in future he proposed to protect his pupils from their annoyances. The next morning there appeared over the door of the grammar school the words "No Protection," written in large letters with white chalk. That same day, at recess, one of the high school boys paraded in front of the door of the grammar school shouting "No Protection," and annoying the grammar school boys. While so engaged Mr. Hathaway sprang from the doorway of his school-room and seized the boy by the collar, and dragged him into his school-room porch and gave him a severe lecture upon his conduct. Whatever other influences were brought to bear upon the case are not known, but there was no more trouble, and Mr. Hathaway proved to the satisfaction of everybody concerned that he was both able and willing to protect his pupils.

After resigning as teacher of the West Grammar School Mr. Hathaway opened a private English and Classical School and fitted young men of his school for college. Amherst, Dartmouth, Harvard, Tufts and Williams Colleges all received students from his school. His school was first located in the second story of the Medford Branch Railway building on Main street, and was afterwards transferred to a double house on the east side of Ashland street. About the year 1850 he built a schoolhouse on the north side of Chestnut street. This house was a story and a half in height, with two entrances;

the boys' room was on the first floor, and the girls' room on the second floor. Mr. Hathaway taught the boys, and Miss Annette Hale (his sister-in-law) the girls. Mr. Hathaway also built a large dwelling-house on the corner of Ashland and Chestnut streets, into which he moved with his family just before Christmas, 1851. His school contained pupils from Medford and the surrounding towns; also from other parts of the United States, Mexico and the West India Islands. He boarded many of his pupils, some of whom remained with him many years. Mr. Joseph Bird of Watertown was the singing master, and Mr. Horace Bird, his brother, the music teacher; he was succeeded by Mr. Henry G. Carey. Mr. Hathaway was a kindly man and was much beloved by his pupils; to illustrate this we quote from a letter from a lady, formerly a pupil of his school: —

"Aaron Kimball Hathaway was a true Christian gentleman, kind and sympathetic, a genuine scholar of the old school, his mind far out-reaching his frail body. The foundation of my early education is, in a measure, due to his intellectual influence. I attended his school, with my brother, in the years 1851 and 2. He always opened the school with devotional service, often supplemented with interesting talk on some moral subject. He was many sided, and interested in everything that was uplifting. He was most happy when seated at his desk, teaching. Helping to develop the minds of the pupils before him, he never discriminated; he had no special favorites, at least it was not evident. I think he made warm friends of nearly all of his pupils; his personality was such that the most unruly feared and respected him, if they did not love him. which last I am sure many did. . . . There were exhibitions occasionally in the old Town Hall by the advanced pupils of the school. Mr. Hathaway was interested in athletic games, always contributed for them, and encouraged and instructed his pupils in the foot-ball games that were held on the field east of the schoolhouse; he watched them at recess with great interest and pleasure. He was successful in managing large unruly boys, bringing out their best, often where other instructors had failed. . . . The controlling influence and authority exerted by the teacher was peculiar, not painfully evident, but one felt it was there. He was interested in civic and church affairs, well versed in law, often in those days called upon for opinions, the execution of deeds and civic documents. He also engaged in surveying, but his forte was instruction; he excelled as a teacher. He was a fine surveyor; many date their

interest in that pursuit to his instruction. He possessed good instruments, and enjoyed assisting and instructing his pupils on the east field. He was very strong in the languages, particularly Latin. I studied that before the English grammar, by his advice. Miss Hale taught the younger pupils in English, but we always recited in language and elocution in the larger room to Mr. Hathaway. He always seemed to be suffering from a hidden malady that sapped his bodily strength, and we were conscious of his fortitude in bearing his burden. He was fine looking, but always pale in countenance."

At the height of its prosperity, in 1860, the school was dispersed by the death of its founder. Its building still remains in Chestnut street, but used as a dwelling-house.

Mr. Hathaway had a fine sense of humor, as illustrated by the following incident: The Rev. Mr. Haskins, Rector of Grace Episcopal Church, and Mr. Hathaway were college classmates, and each was building a dwelling-house in Medford at the same time. Mr. Haskins' house was at West Medford, and was built upon a rock. Mr. Hathaway's house was, as has been before stated, at the corner of Ashland and Chestnut streets, and was built upon sandy soil. The former wrote to the latter that he was surprised that they should differ about building, one on sandy soil and the other upon rock. After the tornado, in the year 1851, it was found that while Mr. Hathaway's house, being outside the path of the tornado, was not damaged, Mr. Haskins' house was entirely demolished; thereupon Mr. Hathaway wrote to his friend, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall."

Mr. Hathaway served upon the school committee of Medford two years. He was at one time in charge of the Bishop estate.

Five children were born to Mr. and Mrs. Hathaway: Edward Kimball Hathaway, born in Woburn, August 19, 1838, drowned in Mystic River, just below Cradock bridge, Medford, July 9, 1844. Mariannette Hale Hathaway, born in Woburn, July 21, 1840; died in Medford, December 12, 1873. Sarah Kimball Hathaway, born in Medford, July 1, 1845; married, April 24, 1867, Abner Loammi Deane, who died in Medford, November 22, 1867. Mrs. Deane

married, October 15, 1879, Thomas Chase Thurlow of West Newbury. Alice Brooks Hathaway, born in Medford, October, 1847; died in Medford, August 24, 1849. Agnes Elizabeth Hathaway, born in Medford, December 25, 1849; married, October 1, 1873, Henry Nelson Loud of Au Sable, Mich.; died at Ann Arbor, Mich., March 25, 1909. Mr. Hathaway died in Medford, September 16, 1860. Mrs. Hathaway died in Medford, May 29, 1881. Sarah K. and Agnes E. Hathaway both taught in the public schools of Medford.

I am indebted to Miss Eliza M. Gill for assistance rendered in the preparation of this article.

The following is a partial list of the pupils of the Hathaway School, with places of residence as nearly correct as it was possible to obtain them: —

FROM MEDFORD.

Emily Angier.
Harry Bradlee.
Eliza Bishop.
Josephine L. Bates.
Joseph D. Cushing.
Sarah M. Cushing.
Julia Cushing.
Nellie Evans.
George G. Floyd.
Eliza M. Gill.
Eleanor H. Green.
Samuel S. Green.
Edmund F. Hooper.
Agnes E. Hathaway.
Sarah K. Hathaway.
Ned Hastings.
Edward Holman.
Herbert Holman.
Samuel C. Lawrence.
Otis F. Litchfield.
Horace E. Morse.
Herman Mills.
Helen E. Mills.
Thatcher Magoun, 3d.
Sarah Miller.
Emily Nason.
Helen Porter.
Elisha Pierce.
Georgianna Pierce.
Julia Raymond.
Agnes Raymond.
The Misses Revalion.
Marietta T. Reed.
Milton F. Roberts.
Frank Stevens.
Thomas Silsby.
Edward Thorndike.
Charles Thorndike.
Mary J. Tay.
Samuel Vaughn.
George Wise.

FROM MALDEN.

Charles G. Fall.
Albert W. Moore.

FROM BOSTON.

George Evans.
Alfred Evans.
Josephine Smith.

From Everett.
Julian Van Voorhies.
Fred. Van Voorhies.

From Newbury.
Mary A. Jackson.
Mary S. Moody.

From Winchester.
Edward Bacon.
John Bacon, Jr.

From Woburn.
Traverse Morong.

From Falmouth, Me.
Susie M. Noyes.

From Vermont.
Frances F. Stimpson.

From New York.
William Adams.

From Santo Domingo.
Arthur Washington Lithgow.
Thomas Lithgow.

From Porto Rico.
Frederic De Mena.
Enrique De Mena.

From Cuba.
Manuel Calves.
Everisto Calves.
Raymond De Groen.
Antonio De Navarro.
Everardo Woodbury.

Residence Unknown.
John Henry Bufford.
David Callender.
John Hutchinson.
John Hood.
Kitty Hood.
Charles Stanton.

## GRANDCHILDREN OF A. K. HATHAWAY.

Children of Thomas Chase Thurlow and Sarah Kimball Thurlow, nee Hathaway:

George Chase Thurlow.
Edward Kimball Thurlow.
Susan Chase Thurlow.
Winthrop Hale Thurlow.

All born in West Newbury, Mass.
Edward Kimball Thurlow and wife are now living in Wuhu, China.

George Chase Thurlow and Annie Goodrich Thurlow have four Children:

George Harold Thurlow.
Dorothy Goodrich Thurlow.
Lois Chase Thurlow.
Elizabeth Kimball Thurlow.

These last are the tenth generation living on Chase estate.

Children of Henry Nelson and Agnes E. H. Loud:

Henry Kimball Loud.

Born in Au Sable, Mich.

Frederick Hale Loud.

Born in Au Sable, Mich.

Emily Hathaway Loud.

Born in Au Sable, Mich. Died in Poughkeepsie, N. Y., December 30, 1901.

Marian Violet Loud.

Only one born in Medford, Mass.

George Brewster Loud.

Born in Au Sable, Mich.

Arthur Caleb Loud.

Born in Au Sable, Mich.

Children of George B. Loud:

George Brewster Loud, Jr.
Stewart Montgomery Loud.

## THE ADAMS FARM REGION.

Because of the extensive building operations (in the locality named below) in recent years, and the present development of so-called "College Acres," including the demolition of the Willis house, at the corner of Main street and Stearns avenue, the following, communicated by Mr. Francis Wait, is of interest: —

Squire Nathan Adams, also called Captain, owned a large farm on both sides of Main street. His dwelling-house stood on the site of the "Mystic House." * After his death (1842) George E. Adams (a grandson) carried on the farm and had a milk route to Boston. He (George) married, in 1847, Miss Staniels of Malden. He moved the old house and built the house afterward called "Mystic House," where he took his bride. A driveway at the north side of his house led to his farmhouse, which was later moved on the opposite side of Main street. On the south side of his dwelling-house was an extensive apple orchard (destroyed by canker-worms in the '50s), which afterward became the Mystic Trotting Park. Squire Nathan was prominent in town affairs.

Deacon Nathan Adams lived half-way up Winter Hill on the west side of Main street. Children were Nathan, Thomas, Andrew, John Q., Edward E., Elizabeth (Mrs. Staniels), Almira (Mrs. Austin), Catherine and Rebecca.

Peter T. Adams (son of Squire Nathan), a farmer, lived at one time in the Willis house. He built and lived in what *was* the next house south therefrom.

* Removed to Tufts square.

George E. Adams was later Division Superintendent of the Middlesex Horse Railroad in Medford, with stables in his barns. He drove the pioneer Sunday car into Boston.

"College Field," lying between Two-penny brook, the railroad and Harvard street, now intersected by streets bearing names of colleges, was, in 1870, the location of the Massachusetts Brick Company's works. Its sandy soil is now furnishing material for concrete blocks that are being widely distributed in Medford for house foundations.

Preceding the brick making, in the '60s, this level plain had upon it a half-mile race track that antedated the mile track of Mystic Park. At times of races, railway trains made stops on the bridge over Harvard street, and barges were lined up below for passengers to the park.

---

## MEDFORD WEDDING AND MEDFORD SHIPS.

We sometimes wonder why certain entries are not found on our town records that we might naturally expect to see there. The following from Hunnewell's "A Century of Town Life, a history of Charlestown, Mass,. 1775–1871," containing an historical sketch of the First Church, taken from the records kept by the Rev. Warren Fay, explains one instance: —

MARRIAGES.

1829 July 21 Elisha Hayden to Elizabeth J. Sables, both of Medford. The Congregational Minister was out of town.

The minister referred to was Rev. Aaron Warner of the Second Congregational Church, Medford. They were members of his church before their marriage, and were among those who withdrew in 1847 and formed the Mystic Church. Mr. and Mrs. Hayden are well remembered by our older citizens. Their home for many years was in the second house west of the Central Fire Station, on the north side of South street. He was of the firm of Hayden & Cudworth, and in a list of twenty-four ship-builders only five built more ships than this firm. The output of their yard was thirty-nine vessels, the first in 1847, the last in 1866. The largest tonnage, 1,250,

was only surpassed by three vessels built in Medford ship-yards.

Mr. Hayden came from Scituate, and his partner from Marshfield. The South Shore towns furnished nearly all the workmen in the yards here. They were sturdy, thrifty men, skilled in their trades, an honor to their times and to American labor, and we might well wish to see their type reproduced today. Many became prosperous and influential, and a goodly number established their homes here, along the river, especially in the vicinity of Ship street, and their descendants are still our citizens.

Mrs. Hayden died in Medford, August 29, 1872, and her husband November 25, 1874, aged sixty-nine.

William M. Cudworth died February 3, 1877, aged sixty-three. Models of several vessels in possession of the Medford Historical Society were presented by Mr. Cudworth's daughter.

E. M. G.

## THE SECCOMB RECORDS.

Extracts from "Texts Books" of Deacon Joseph Seccombe, copied from the thirty-fourth volume of the Essex Institute Historical Collections, 1898, January to June.

FAST DAY January 8. 1756 (Medford) Text in the morning from Isaiah 42:25. This fast was appointed by reason of the surprising earthquakes which we have been visited with of late.

Aug. 7. 1757. Timothy 2:1 & 2. Now this sermon was preached on account of our Governor Thomas Pownall Esq$^{r.}$ who arrived the 3$^{d}$ inst.

Oct. 9$^{th}$ 1757. Jeremiah 10, first part of 25 verse. This is the first Sabbath that we kept in the new house.*

Aug. 20$^{th}$ 1758. The Sabbath after we heard the joyful news of the surrender of the city of Louisbourg to the English; the text was from Jeremiah 23:24.

Thanksgiving day Sept. 14$^{th}$ 1758. Text. Psalm 115:1. 2. 3; this Thanksgiving was appointed by Reason of the Reduction of Louisbourg. which was surrendered up to the English July 26.

* The Seccomb house in Medford square.

Fast day June 28th, 1759. This fast was appointed on account of the present expedition against Canada.

Aug. 5th, This morning Mr. Turell begun the reading of the Scriptures in a new folio Bible which was ye gift of ye Hon. Isaac Royall Esqr to the church.

Sept. 9th Benjamin Francis child baptized. Benjamin the first baptized after we had ye new silver basin and brass frame which was the gift of Mr. John Willis deceased: the basin cost a hundred and odd pounds and ye frame 9 odd.

Nov. 23d, (Mrs. Ruth Brooks that was) and I was out bride and bridegroom.

Dec. 7th, This day I am 24 years old. I. S.

Jan. 4. 1761. Funeral Sermon for our late Sovereign Lord King George the second of blessed memory, who died at his palace at Kensington ye 25th of Oct. last. in 77 year of his age and 34 of his Reign, His death was sudden.

March 15th, Text Isaiah 42: 25, This text was chosen on account of the shock of the earthquake felt Thursday ye 12 instant at about an hour after 2 o'clock in the morning a pretty considerable shock. (My spouce and I were at Boston).

Fast day April 22d, 1761: This is the first annual fast that I ever knew to be on Wednesday it has been customary in this Province to have fasts and thanksgivings on Thursday but tomorrow is St. Georges day which may be the occasion of its being a day sooner.

Feb. 14. 1762. This day I Joseph Seccomb and Ruth my wife openly renew our baptismal covenant and were received into the first church of Christ in Danvers by and under the Pastoral care of the Rev. Mr. Peter Clark.

Aug. 26. 1764. I put up this day a note for the death of my sister Mehitable who died yesterday was a week ye 18 instant.

Nov. 29. 1767 Sister Rebecca Hall died last Monday morning ye 23d.

April 18, 1773 Mr. Thomas Seccombe (Medford) died last Thursday night ye 15th Instant of a complication of disorders Aged 62 years.

Sept. 18 1774. Last week the Rev[d] Mr. David Osgood was ordained a Pastor of ye Church in Medford.

Wednesday April 19. 1775. "The Troops of his Brittanick Majesty commenced Hostilities upon the People of the Province of the Massachusetts Bay a Detachment from the Regular Army at Boston went out on ye Evening of ye 18[th] and march[d] for Concord and in their way thro Lexington which they reach[d] before sunrise on ye 19[th] they met with a Company of Militia of about 100 men mustered near the Meeting House; upon their coming up to our men they ordered them to disperse & throw down their Armes, calling them Rebels; upon which the troops huzza[d] and immediately one or two Officers discharged their Pistols which was instantaneously followed by the Firing of 4 or 5 of the Soldiers and then there seemed to be a general Discharge from the whole Body. Eight of our men were killed and nine wounded In a few minutes after this action the Enemy renewed their march for Concord at which place they distroy[d] some of the Province Stores. here they killed two of our Men. but our People oblig[d] them to retreat back to Lexington where they met with Lord Percy with a large Reinforcement, however after halting awhile they retreated again and kept firing upon our men. Pillaging almost every House they Passed by breaking and distroying Doors, Windows, Glases &c. and carrying off Clothing and other valuable Effects: Burnt some houses. It appeared to be their design to burn & destroy all before them and nothing but our vigorous Pursuit (under Providence) prevented their infernal Purposes from being put in Execution. But the savage Barbaraties exercised upon the Bodies of our unfortunate Bretheren who fell. is almost incredible. Not content with shooting down the unarmed aged and infirm they disregarded the Cries of the wounded, killing them without mercy and mangling their Bodies in the most shocking manner as they retreated back to Charlestown. We had 7 men belonging to Danvers killed & a number belong. to other Towns. but ye Number of the Regulars was far greater. We have the Pleasure to

say that notwithstanding the highest Provocations given by the Enemy not one Instance of Cruelty that we heard of was committed by our victorious Militia: but listening to the Merciful Dictates of the Christian Religion they breathed higher Sentiments of Humanity." *Essex Gazette*, April 25, 1775.

Sept 24. This day we had a Note up for the Death of Brother Ebenezer Brooks.

Feb. 25. 1776. Old Mr. Zachariah Pool of Medford died last week suddenly.

The "Texts Books" close February, 1777.

Deacon Joseph Seccomb was the son of Thomas Seccomb, for many years town clerk of Medford. He followed in the footsteps of his father * in keeping a record of important events. It appears from the "Texts Books" that he left Medford and took up his residence in Danvers early in the year 1762.

J. H. H.

## ALFRED R. WINTER.

On January 3, 1915, a former Treasurer of the Medford Historical Society, Mr. Alfred R. Winter, passed away after an illness dating from September 19, 1914.

As son of William C. and Mary C. (Brown) Winter, he was born March 3, 1874. He graduated from Boston University in 1901, also from the Teachers' College, Columbia University, from which he received a degree, 1913. He served as principal of grammar schools in Walpole, Peabody, Vineyard Haven and Medford, coming to the Washington School as associate in 1904, and becoming principal when Mr. Morrison retired in 1906. Here he started a Boys' Club, which proved very helpful. Entering the Boston grammar schools as sub-master at Jamaica Plain, 1909, and Dorchester, 1910, he was, on March 16, 1914, appointed to the Continuation School office as Division Superintendent of Vocational Guidance, which position he held until his death. He was always happy in

*See REGISTER, Vol. XIII, p. 70, for account of Thomas Seccomb's record of sermons.

his work, especially in the vocational, for which he seemed peculiarly fitted.

Of his intrinsic worth as a man and educator there are many testimonials laying stress on his great executive ability. A. E. D.

## HARRIET W. BROWN.

Harriet Wilson (Joyce) Brown, widow of John Brown, and daughter of Seth and Harriet (Daniels) Joyce, was born in Medford, Mass., October 29, 1826, of which city she was a life-long resident. She was a member of the Medford Historical Society, and a constant attendant at its meetings as long as her health permitted. She was secretary for many years of the Female Union Temperance Society, an organization formed in 1845, and which held regular meetings for fifty years. She assisted in forming the first Medford High School Association, and was one of the committee that arranged the program for its first annual meeting. She was a member of the First Baptist Church and was an earnest worker in its interests. She died in Medford, after a long and useful life, on December 19, 1914. J. H. H.

## HIGH STREET IN 1870.

A SON and daughter of old Medford have furnished the REGISTER reminiscences of old Ship and Salem streets, two of the five that lead from Medford Square. High street as it was forty-five years ago is the present subject of one then a new-comer.

On a pleasant day in early June, 1870, a matter of business took him from Wear bridge to the square, and though provided with a horse a little later, he covered the distance that day on foot.

Wear bridge was not then the substantial structure of today, and beneath the old one, a view of which may be seen in the city report of 1894, the incoming tide swiftly surged. An island lay a little down stream, and a little farther on the Arlington side, shaded by large willows,

was the picturesque Wood's mill, with its low but hated and fated dam. On the left lay the broad acres of the Brooks estate, enclosed by walls of dark Medford granite, just behind which were spruce trees, as well as others of deciduous variety. Well back from the road and on the rising ground were the Mystic hickories, and farther on, but nearer the highway and approached by a curving drive bordered by spruces, was the farmhouse and great barn surmounted by a cupola with a dragon vane. This barn was then but ten years old, and replaced the one destroyed by an incendiary in 1860. Its basement was of Medford granite, each column and arched lintel cut from a single block. Just northward from the farmhouse was the granite arch, built fifty years before, over the canal. This was of Concord granite, of marked contrast to the somber walls that bordered the highway. Elms that once bordered the canal banks and shaded the streets later gave the place the name of Elms Farm.

Beyond this, among great oaks, and some pines as well as elms, was the mansion house, the home of Edward Brooks and his son Francis, but this was approached from Grove street, the ancient Cambridge road to Woburn. Fifty years before, Mr. Brooks' father had begun Medford's park system by setting trees and fencing the "Delta" at Grove street. The stone walls beyond extended to a long line of spruces that bordered the railway.

At the right hand from Wear bridge lay a broad open plain that sloped gradually to the river, and beyond its center was a large house of cruciform shape and flat roof surmounted by a two-storied cupola, with roofs also flat. This was the home of George F. Spaulding, and his land was enclosed by a fence of not fifty-seven, but *many* varieties. A few sizable elms were before it, and these, with a few others scattered here and there, a willow or two, and a big dilapidated barn opposite the Brooks farmhouse, were the only objects to break the monotony of the scene. This plain was then called the Smith estate, and along the street for most of the way was also walled. After passing Grove street there were entrances in the walls, and cellar holes and remains of foundations could

be seen, where the Smith residence and barns had been burned a few years before. Next was the house of John Duane the florist, that had been built four years, and farther on his greenhouses. This house still remains, and with some additions is now the parochial residence of St. Raphael's Church. Beyond the greenhouse was a hedge of dogwood, and here the stone wall ended and a wooden picket fence, painted a dull yellow, enclosed the open space in front of the substantial building that bore across its front this legend,

MYSTIC HALL SEMINARY,

in gilded iron capitals. In this building Ellis Pitcher kept a grocery, and also the West Medford post office.

A very ordinary road led southward by the seminary building past the residence of Henry T. Wood and the double-decked cupola, to a bridge and across the river. This was Harvard avenue, and from this diagonally across the field to the railroad was a row of poplar trees that grew to large proportions ere they were cut down.

Opposite the seminary building stood two houses belonging to the railroad, in which Daniel Kelley and Reuben Willey, the flagman and station agent, lived. The station house was near the crossing, and had been built but about ten years. The crossing had no gates, but two huge posts supported a sign-board across the street, whose metallic letters warned passers to "*Look out for the engine while the bell rings.*" This was the old formula ere "Stop, Look, Listen," came in vogue. Flagman Kelley was an old employee who had lost an arm while on duty as fireman, and then carried a red flag or light as danger signal.

Across the track to the left was the residence of Hon. J. M. Usher. It stood "somewhat back from the village street" and was heavily shaded by trees, mostly maple, with some mountain ash. A somewhat massive fence was before it, painted a somber brown, as was the house, and beyond was a vacant lot extending to Warren street. At its corner stood a very large horse-chestnut tree, that in its top showed the effects of the wrench and twist it

received from the tornado, twenty years before. Though much higher, the great Whitmore elm showed less of disaster, and though a little in the street and nearer the railway, was a noble specimen.

On the opposite side was first a triangular lot, vacant except for a small one-story brown building, in which had been a little store and the post office, but at this time not in use. Beyond this, where the post office now is, was a dwelling-house that may have been built early in the century. It had evidently seen better days. It was occupied by John C. Hatch, who two years later built and moved to a new house on the hill. Next was the home of Capt. Joseph Wyatt. This was a white cottage, standing with end toward the street, and with three entrance doors, and apple trees in the front yard. This house had been unroofed by the tornado, and in his repair the captain had put a pitched roof over the whole house, instead of over the front with a lean-to, as those old sloping roofs were styled. The captain was a nonagenarian in '70, and with his white locks and long staff, that he grasped below its top, was a noticeable figure on the village street.

Before his home was, and is, an elm that survived, not only the tornado, but the proverbial small boy. The captain's little grandson, William J. Cheney (who, eighty years old, passed away on Christmas Day last) has told several times how he was about to cut the little sapling down. His grandmother said, "No, no, William, let it grow and some time it will be a big tree." And so the tree grew, and he grew to man's estate and lived under its shade, and remodelled his grandfather's old home, which still remains intact. The last time the writer saw him he told the story, and said, "Tell the people about that tree," and our promise is now kept.

Beyond the captain's house was a shady road, Canal street, bordered by lofty elms, and a willow at the entrance drive to the Mystic Mansion.*

* See REGISTER, Vol. XV, p. 80, and Vol. XI, p. 49, for account of this and the seminary.

On the opposite corner was the house occupied by a Mr. Brockway, a carpenter. This still remains, but with various additions and alterations. Its lot was narrow on High street, as Whitmore brook was close beside it, and beyond the brook a narrow meadow, then a two-story house, now for many years occupied by J. L. Brockway, Grand Army comrade and grocer.

The two-story house next to Cottage street was then occupied by a Mr. Hooper, and is but little changed. Beyond Cottage street the ground rose, and there was a pear orchard and a white cottage house (now removed to Allston street), the dwelling of James W. Wilson. This was close in the corner next Allston street.

Beginning back at Warren street on the other side, a large open lot lay between the street and Whitmore brook, and also beyond the brook was open until on the rising ground was the old gambrel-roofed house of the senior Samuel Teele. This in exterior shape remains but little changed, but modern cornice, porch and windows, with removal of fences and the extension of Brooks street to High, make a difference.

Next beyond was the brown dwelling of Selectman J. P. Richardson, who kept a grocery at Medford square. This has been removed and a two-apartment house is on its site.

An open lot was between this and Allston street, and a pile of stones thereon marked the spot from which Mr. Lane had moved his dwelling to Purchase street.

The house next beyond Allston street was that of John H. Norton, a builder. It was an old house, with small windows, fifteen paned, and sat but little above the grade of the lot, while in the rear was the barn and shop of the owner. The doors were overhung with woodbine, and large apple trees were near by, as the lot was a large one. It was here that the former owner, Mr. Huffmaster, was fatally injured during the tornado. All these buildings were later removed to, and still are on, Allston terrace.

Farther on and farther back from the street was, and

is, the stone house of Daniel A. Gleason, Esq., then recently built. Next came a deep lot on which, but not facing or near the street, are two houses then of Mr. Hastings, who was styled Commodore. Mystic street curved up the hill, but its course is straight, down. Opposite Mr. Norton's the Brooks school building, then of wood and incomplete within, loomed up large in the middle of its roomy lot, that still speaks well for the good judgment of the town's committee, who secured its location between three streets. Beyond Auburn street, on the ledge, was the brick residence of Richard Hallowell, and next, the substantial one of Edward Hall, both business men of Boston. After the lapse of years no change is noticeable here, save the enlargement backward of the latter.

At Mystic street, that June morning, the writer was impressed with the beautiful view seen in all directions. The over-arching elms were in their vernal foliage, and the sight was one not to be forgotten. In fact, the planting of so many trees on that rocky hill and by the sandy streets at its base, speaks well for the foresight of Messrs. Teel and Hastings, the former owners.

Beyond Mystic street, among trees, was a large house, soon after turned around to face as at present and a few changes made in its exterior. It still remains, neglected, disused for years, damaged by fire, a blot upon the scene. Along the level ridge adjoining the street was no sidewalk and no house, until one came suddenly upon the old Richardson, or perhaps Bradshaw, house, screened by lilacs, at the entrance of Hastings lane. This, enlarged in '72, has but a few years since been moved around a little, and with its extensive repair has now a new lease of life, though perhaps one of the oldest houses in Medford.

Mystic street has been a favorite locality for clergymen. On the highest elevation of High street the rector of Grace Church had his residence built in 1851, and just before, Rev. John Pierpont his, of brick, close by. Rev. Mr. Haskins' house was, while in construction, en-

tirely demolished by the tornado, but was soon rebuilt. In '70 it was owned and occupied by Nathan Bridge, a business man of Boston. The terraced slopes below the house were noticeable, as well as the fruit trees thereon, and while the driveway thereto was from Mystic, there were entrance steps at the farthest corner from the sidewalk of High street.

From this point onward for many rods was a rough stone wall and dogwood hedge, which ended at a substantial fence in front of the residence of Rev. Charles Brooks, the Medford historian; later this came to be known as the "Lilacs." Save the opening of a street through the rocky hill, and the removal of fence and gateway, this side of High street shows little change today. A high board fence enclosed the back yard of his boyhood home next beyond, and his father's gambrel-roofed house closely adjoined the sidewalk. The great chimneys and sloping roof of the lean-to in the rear proclaimed it an old-timer, and within the scanty front yard three great sycamores towered, and reached out their long branches in kindly shade over the passers along Woburn street.

Thus far the writer had walked over what was once a branch from the main highway, and had come to the old center of Medford in days agone. He began to realize that Medford square was still in the distance, and after looking the old houses over, resumed his walk. Passing Hastings lane his attention was fixed on the ledge of rock that jutted out toward the road, on which was a wooden structure that proved to be the cupola of the first Brooks schoolhouse, which had just been changed into a dwelling and is still used as such. Below this ledge was the entrance drive to the great square house of Edmund Hastings, with the broad green meadow before it, and the house and greenhouses of Mr. Bean bordering the brook. The pedestrian was on the left hand, for there was a sidewalk. Leaving Woburn street he noticed a cellar hole, partially filled, and with sumac and butternut trees in and around it; and next a not

too modern dwelling, succeeded by one occupied by a Mr. Gibson, and which he afterward learned was the site of Medford's first meeting-house in 1693. Then came a lane leading to another house further back, and next a new house in process of building. Just here the sidewalk was much above the street, somewhat protected by posts and rails and a growth of lilacs. The Simonds house came next, and lower down a white and newer cottage after a sudden descent, then a great outcropping ledge, and farther back the quaint gambrel-roof cottage of Mr. Gillard, and then the meadow through which flowed the brook we know by the name of Meeting-house. Pausing beneath the grateful shade of the big elm, that in the sidewalk still remains, the writer took in the view for a time, and then walked along the slightly upward grade. Vacant land then as now across the way, but on the left a large white house set squarely facing the sun near the street, in a space as yet, after forty-five years, open, while trees are all about it. This was the home of Alonzo D. Puffer. It resembled very much the one built and owned by Dr. Osgood, but was doubtless much older. Two years later it was removed to its present location and enlarged. A few rods further and he came to where another road crossed at acute angles. This the reader will recognize as the present Winthrop square.

A big, dark-colored house lay beyond the crossing street, and beyond it a lane. The house had a long rambling ell and quaint dormer windows, faced the sun, and the first story was almost hidden by the lilacs and other trees that were near it. This was, of course, the Porter or Turell house. Steps in the wall and a gravel walk led up to a house on the hill, then more vacant land and another lane, and next an old, old house, quite small, with a lean-to in the rear, and painted yellow. This was the Roach house. Beyond this the land was higher than the sidewalk and was retained by a brick wall topped by a low fence of wood. While the fence was upright the wall had been crowded out at the top and looked

ready to fall. A driveway beyond it led into the grounds of the Train house. Later the brick wall was removed, the street widened, and the front porch and steps of house narrowed a little. But who of all passers has ever seen those front doors open? Next more lilacs, the old Watson house, now just gone, and there was the curved carriage path, and the great straw-colored meeting-house of the First Parish. Its classic architecture, pillared porch and storied steeple, all in massive proportion, could but command attention, and as the clock struck the hour, there was that in the tone of the bell that proclaimed it one of the olden days. The sign-board of the road beside it said nothing then of powder house, but beyond it in stately simplicity, was another great house, about whose entrance doors the old-time carpenters have shown their skill. This also near the street (nearer now), as though good Doctor Osgood wanted to save all the land possible for his garden.

The wide lawn with its trees and walks, and the spacious house in English style of Mr. Boynton was especially attractive, but no more noticeable than the next, that seemed completely shut in by a high board fence. Still, the uncommon sight of a three-story ell and two-story house was the same as now. But stately and singular was the next, the residence of the elder Magoun, the figure-eight house it was sometimes called, with its steep drive and the stable in its rear. A large open frontage on the street extended up the hillside and on toward another building the stranger thought to be a schoolhouse, though he wasn't sure whether the vane on the cupola was a telescope or a base-ball bat.

Then, close together, were five houses, all but the first (which had a long roof sloping backward) of generous proportions, and by their style of construction proclaiming their respectable bearing and evident age. Then a narrow lane led backward to a brick house, that needed but a glance to show it to be one of old-time importance; and next another, stately indeed, as befitted the old governor's mansion; and then the big horse-chestnut tree,

a monarch indeed, to which the birds of the air still come. The Simpson tavern, with its wide porch and balcony. and another brick building beyond it. Oh! but there was another before coming to the tavern, *i.e.*, the Seccomb house, a little one — what was it, a barber's shop or a reading room?

A vacant lot was next Forest street where had been the old Tufts house.

On the other side of old High street and leaving the place that has since become Winthrop square the land was much below the street, whose retaining wall and sidewalk was fenced for safety. Large elms were noticeable, and cows were pastured in the enclosure. A big double house that looked substantial stood here, then another field that sloped away to Meeting-house brook and the river. Next was Grace Church, but without the chimes or the chapel extension. It was then but a few years built, as also the Tufts residence that adjoined it. This had then no outer chimney, but there was a massive fence along the sidewalk, painted, as was the house, in colors blue. The next house and that of Thatcher Magoun need no description, except to mention the high fence and gateways with lantern over, and the well-kept grounds, and the statuary. Next a large house with mansard roof, a porch over the front entrance, and the ground below the street sloping to the river and vacant for some distance. A small cottage painted straw-color stood close to the way; next the old Grace Church, in which then or later a Medford school was kept. Then came the house of Dr. Bemis; next the fire engine house, since moved a little, and now the Grand Army hall, and next the "Orthodox," or "Mr. McCollom's Church." There was then no clock upon it, but it had a bell which was rung at stated intervals each week day at the town's expense.

A small vacant lot lay beyond the church, and next was the four-story brick block then called the "Usher Building." Next were some low wooden buildings, in one of which was Wyman's market, that in later years

gave place to the Odd Fellows building. The two-story wooden building with the Coburn and another store was there as now, and the Town hall, as everybody knows, was there in 1870, in practically its present appearance. And here ended, or rather began, High street, over which the writer has since many times walked, driven or trolleyed, but never found it so long as on that day.

In this description he has turned into no side streets, as he did into none then. Were the walk to be taken today one would find these streets increased by thirteen, ten of which lie west of the railway. Six of these extend southeasterly across the then open plain, and show attractive views along their maple-bordered lines. One would look in vain for the great barn of Mr. Brooks, or the beautiful arch, though the farmhouse remains. But new streets are here, and new houses, nearly fifty in number, are upon his ancestral estate. The old-time houses of forty-five years ago are, of course, easily recognized, and the number erected since but small. Some changes, however, have been made that have been radical. Below the surface on that day was no sewer, neither water nor gas mains, as now. Today almost the entire length is double-tracked with steel and paved with asphalt or macadam. No wires or conduits then, only the telegraph needed them, and that was along the railway. Mr. Pitcher's grocery became Joseph E. Ober's six months later, but instead of being the only store has numerous competitors. The greenhouses have given place to St. Raphael's Church, the wooden depot to a larger one of stone, and the Usher house, with its trees, to a business and residence block.

The Congregational Church (of stone) has replaced the Wilson home, and the larger Brooks School (of brick) the wooden one. Wolcott road is so new that its mention is scarcely yet history, and the few new houses opposite do not obstruct the view of College Hill. This view is a far different one today, as it has grown from three buildings of the college and three residences on the hill slope. No new dwellings from the top of the

hill to Grace Church save the rectory on one side and the Jenney residence on the other. The Puffer residence was moved, enlarged, and so remodelled as to show no semblance of its former self.

The First Parish Church, of course, replaces the old edifice, the St. Joseph's parochial residence the old Unitarian parsonage, and the Magoun residence has become the Public Library. St. Joseph's Church has been built, as has also the armory, on whose site Mr. Magoun built, in the early seventies, an elaborate stable for his cows, which later became a dwelling-house. The old Episcopal Church has become a double dwelling, the Dr. Bemis house enlarged, and two more built just below it. James Bean's house, now the Children's Library, on one side and the Dutton dwelling on the other of the new Hillside avenue complete the residences built on High street since 1870. The old High School enlargement, the Telephone building, the two banks, and the Weymouth building (Tufts Hall) bring us to Medford Square.

Mr. McCollum's meeting-house (afterward St. Joseph's) still remains as Page & Curtin's store, and the two-story wooden building southward was built by J. M. Usher in '71, but the Opera House block was erected in later years. In making these changes some eight or nine buildings have been demolished and one removed, and one church burned. With the exception of the portion next the square, and another but little longer at West Medford, old High street is a residential street, though one of our main arteries of travel.

Twenty-one thousand people have come to Medford since 1870, but the increase has been little on High street.

With the thought of presenting to the people of today a view of it as it was in '70, and with the hope that the coming years of Medford's growth may keep it in its present beauty, only building on its few remaining spaces attractive homes and substantial structures where business may require, this sketch has been written.

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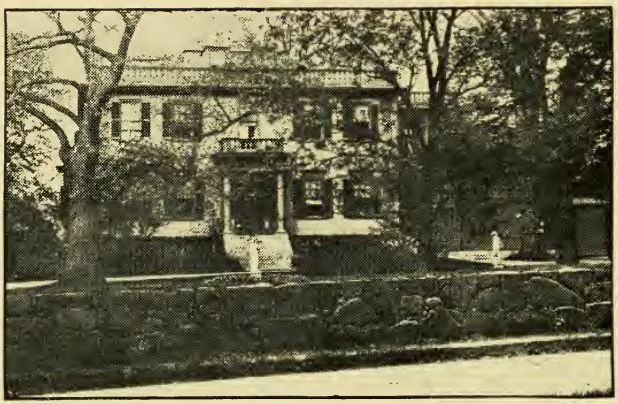

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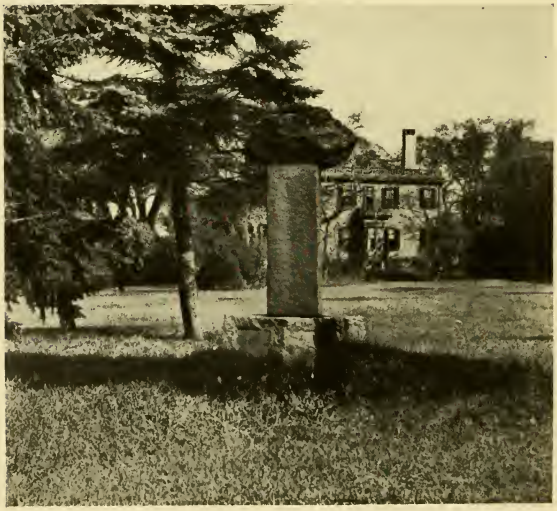

THE INDIAN MONUMENT AND BROOKS MANSION.

# The Medford Historical Register.

VOL. XVIII. APRIL, 1915. No. 2.

## PINE AND PASTURE HILLS

AND THE PART THEY HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF MEDFORD.

### INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

Immediately after the issue of the January REGISTER, the editor received the following: "Now comes your very useful record of High street in 1870; it reawakens my interest. . . . I send these papers in the hope of stirring up the curiosity of Mr. Hooper, yourself, or some other." One of the "papers" is:—

### WANTED, I.

A contour sketch of the tract bounded as below — as nature left it, say, in 1630 to 1635:

E — by line of Governors lane.
S — by river.
W — by line of Library lot.
N — by the crest, [*i.e.*, of the hill].

### WANTED, II.

A history of the Medford industry in dark granite and red gravel.

The "papers" received contain a series of queries, raised by a careful reading and review of "The Ford at Mistick," by J. H. Hooper, Vol. IV, p. 1, REGISTER. One paragraph of the "papers" sent, is:—

> Medford was a spectacle town. A very high, bulky and red nose stuck up between the glasses. Later this was about the best part of Medford, but neither streets nor lots yet fit for homesteads. The colonists wanted practical convenience — not hill-top villas or bungalows. The Halls owned the whole of Pasture hill, but never dreamed of living up there; they left it to the kite-flying boys, and preferred to dig their homes down to the level of common folks.

The writer of the above, a Medford boy of over eighty years ago, doubtless finds his heart turning gratefully

toward his boyhood home. Mr. Hooper has answered in these pages many of Mr. Stetson's queries, and is carefully and diligently working on others. We commend a re-reading of "The Ford at Mistick," and venture the opinion that the "bulky red nose" will be located by the reading of the present paper.

EDITOR.

BEGINNING in the northerly part of the city of Medford, near the boundary line between said city and the town of Stoneham, and running in a southwesterly direction in a slightly curved line, is a ledge of dark-colored rock, strongly impregnated with iron, which is familiarly known as Medford granite. In its course across the city there are several places elevated above the surrounding plain, where, at the time of the great upheaval, the bed rock was split into fragments of greater or less extent, and in the ages that followed, the rain filtering through the earth into the fissures of the rock caused it to oxidize or rust. This disintegrated rock or granite is the so-called red gravel, or, as it is sometimes called, Pasture hill gravel, Pasture hill being the place from which it was first excavated. There are two elevations that have yielded most of the granite that has been quarried and the red gravel that has been excavated. Pine hill, the larger of the elevations, is the point spoken of as being near the Stoneham line. It is supposed to take its name from the pine trees that grew upon it. This hill and the surrounding district furnished a large amount of stone and gravel in former years. The last stone quarried there was used in the construction of Cradock bridge, in the year 1880. Pine hill was a part of the Charlestown wood lots, and became a part of Medford in the year 1754. It is now included in the Middlesex Fells Reservation. Following along the course southwesterly, there are traces of granite and red gravel through nearly the whole distance, until a small elevation is reached just north of Pasture hill and a short distance therefrom, where there was once a granite quarry, then across Hall road to Pas-

ture hill, or the "hill pasture," as it was known in the early days of the plantation.

What is called Pasture hill at the present day is the easterly portion of a hill that extends westerly to Marble or Meeting-house brook. The crest of the hill is but a short distance from Medford square. The extreme southerly portion thereof, that centers where the old high schoolhouse is situated, formed the bank of the river. From this point, where the width of the granite formation was quite narrow, the rock extended down under the river, to reappear on George street, opposite the Lorin L. Dame schoolhouse.

Its next and last appearance in Medford is in a field south of, and adjoining the estate of the late George L. Stearns. Powder House hill, in the city of Somerville, is of the same formation. When the Metropolitan sewer was constructed, this granite ledge was found in the excavation in High street, in front of the schoolhouse lot, very near the surface and extended down below the bottom of the excavation, which was below high-water mark. From this point of the hill that formed the bank of the river, the elevation sloped down, both east and west to the line that separated the upland from the marshland. At several places it was quite abrupt. This line on the west began at Marble or Meeting-house brook near Winthrop street, and ran along in the rear of the estates that front on High street, substantially as it exists today, until it reaches St. Joseph's church lot. Then it crosses a portion of that lot just west of and adjoining the Armory building, to the landing place formerly called the bank, which was the northerly end of the ford, and which is now a part of the Armory lot. On this lot once stood a tannery, slaughter-house, and one of Medford's ship-yards. Bordering the river around the base of the hill, the marshland begins again near the square, following down near Riverside avenue, crossing the avenue just below the brick engine house of the Boston & Maine Railroad Corporation, and passing in the rear of the old burying-ground to Salem street near Gravelly

bridge. That portion of the hill west of the schoolhouse lot remains in substantially its natural condition, except for a few minor changes.

On the southeasterly side of the hill near the river was a thick deposit of coarse white gravel, which covered the granite formation, forming the bank of the river and extending down to the marsh line. It is probable that there was but little, if any, marsh west of Main street. Judging from what is known of the conformation of the hill, the gravelly beach must have extended as far as the square. It was on this slope of the hill, close to the water's edge, near the fording place, on the pathway from Salem to Mistick ford and near to the future location of the bridge, that Governor Cradock's servants selected their dwelling-place. It was an ideal spot, there being no other location from Wilson's farm to the Wears, taking all things into consideration, that could compare with the surroundings of what is now the present square. (See map of Ten Hills farm made in 1637, also map supposed to have been made in 1633 and bearing legends in the handwriting of Governor John Winthrop, in Vol. I, No. 4, of the MEDFORD HISTORICAL REGISTER.)

No traces of the granite formation have been found east of Governors avenue. All the houses on the north side of High street were supplied with water from wells dug down into the white gravel deposit.

Before proceeding to consider the changes that have taken place on the easterly and southerly side of the hill, let us put ourselves on the same position as did the writer of the article on the ancient ford. (See Vol. IV, No. 1, of the MEDFORD HISTORICAL REGISTER.) The writer, in attempting to describe the situation of the landscape as it existed at the date of the settlement of the plantation, located his mind's eye on the crest of the hill, in the rear of the site of the old high school lot on High street, and gazed about the landing place of the ford a short distance both east and west. Locating our mind's eye in the position above referred to, let us gaze southerly and easterly from the landing place of the ford

to the landing called No-Man's-Friend, at the foot of Cross street on Riverside avenue; let us also suppose it to be low water in the river. We will see a gravel beach extending down to low-water mark, almost if not as far as the square; then on the east side of Main street the marshland extending as far as No-Man's-Friend landing, and Gravelly creek winding its crooked way through the marsh to the river. We will see in the place where the town pump formerly stood, a pond of water. Rev. Charles Brooks, in his history of Medford, says, "Where the town pump now stands in the market-place there was a small pond, whose edges were covered with a growth of small flags; and there are persons now living (1855) whose fathers have told them, that wild ducks were shot in that pond." We will also see the path from Salem to Mistick ford trailing over the present Salem street, fording Gravelly creek, passing along the edge of the pond in the market-place or square, and winding around the verge of the hill to the landing place of the ford. This is the path travelled by Ralph Sprague and his party (two of whom were his brothers Richard and William) from Salem through the wilderness to Mistick ford, in the summer of 1628(9). They found Mr. Cradock's servants occupying a farm called Mistick, that they had planted on the east side of the river called Mistick. It is almost certain that this path was an Indian trail that passed through Medford, and continued westerly to the wears at the outlet of the Mystic ponds where the Indians were wont to assemble for the purpose of fishing.

Let us recall to our minds how that portion of the hill looked a few years since, in the rear of the houses known as the Dudley and Ebenezer Hall houses. The hill in the rear of the Dudley Hall lot was as high as the eaves of the house, and it was still higher in the rear of the Benjamin Hall house. Gazing at the same time at the river bank we will then understand what the contour of the hill must have been, and what a large amount of material has been removed, to make the changes that we see today. The river bank has been walled up with

split granite, from the ancient ford to No-Man's-Friend landing; and the space back of the wall, as also the marshes, have been filled above high water mark. The grade of the market-place or square has been raised many feet and the pool of water has disappeared. Cradock bridge has been built, also the dam with lock and canal. Salem path to Mistick ford has been widened and is now known as Salem street; before it took its present name it was known as the Malden road. Main street, Forest street and Riverside avenue (formerly known as Mile lane, and still later as Ship street), have been laid out. High street has been cut through the thick gravel deposit, and the sites of the houses on the north side of the street have been graded back into the hill.

The site of the lot of Benjamin Hall, senior, afterwards known as the Dr. Swan lot, was excavated further back into the hill than the other lots nearer the square, and what remained of the hill on that lot was terraced and set out with fruit trees, shrubs and flowering plants, and the several terraces were reached by flights of stone steps. When in its prime it was one of the show places of Medford. The upper terrace of the Dudley Hall lot was reached by a long flight of stone steps. The stable of Benjamin Hall was east of his house and near the street. The stable and carriage houses of the other houses were on the opposite side of the street. The grading of High street and the sites of these houses furnished the material used in filling back of the retaining walls, raising the grade of the market-place or square, Main street and the marshes. In recent years a large amount of material has been removed from this slope of the hill, and used for the repair of streets and for other purposes. Governors avenue from High street to the point where it connected with Pasture Hill lane, was laid out over the lot of land formerly owned and occupied by Benjamin Hall, senior, and still later by Dr. Daniel Swan. The greater part of this lot afterwards came into the possession of the town of Medford. It contained a large amount of stone and gravel, (both white and red) suitable

for highway purposes. From the northerly line of this lot the avenue runs northerly, including within its location the old lane which was about one rod in width. From the hill on the west side of the lane, was probably quarried most of the stone used in the construction of the retaining walls on the bank of the river. Red gravel was also extensively excavated from this portion of the hill. This quarry was but little used for many years prior to the hill being laid out into building lots.

The Pine hill district contained the largest masses of granite, and was the probable source of most of the split granite, both cut and uncut, so extensively used for building purposes in this vicinity. Medford granite was much in demand. A former resident of the town says, "Mr. Joseph Grinnel built a house of it in New Bedford in 1830, and told me it came round Cape Cod in a schooner." Medford red gravel was very popular. It was used on street and garden walks, both in Medford and in the surrounding cities and towns. The city of Boston used it on the walks of the Common and Public Garden. It was also used on the walks of Mount Auburn cemetery.

We extract from the records of the town of Woburn the first mention of a highway from Woburn to Mystic bridge.

"14th of the 7 month 1646, Edward Convers and Samuel Richardson are appointed to lay out a highway between this town and Mistick bridge being joined with some of Charlestown and some of Mistick House." [Governor Cradock's farm house in Medford square.]

The record fails to give the location of the way. There is, however, but one way where the road could have been laid out, and that is substantially where it is located today. That is to say, from the square to Brooks' corner, over or near the present location of High street, then over Woburn and old Purchase streets to Symmes' corner, and so on to Woburn. Probably at that early day the road passed around the verge of Pasture hill, the slope of the great south bastion of the hill

being quite abrupt, and at that time probably but little grading was done. The early settlers were content with most any kind of a road if it was passable.

That no record ever existed is manifest by the repeated laying out of the way. High street from the square to Brooks' corner was known as the road to Woburn, until it received its present name. That portion of the street from Brooks' corner to the Arlington line was called by several names: the way to the wears, the highway from Brooks' corner to the wears, the road to Menotomy, and the road to West Cambridge. Woburn road was extensively travelled after the construction of Cradock bridge, it being the most direct route from the northern settlements to Charlestown and Boston.

—JOHN H. HOOPER.

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## ROMANCE IN HISTORY.

[Read before the Bay State Historical League, January 25, 1913, in Wilder Hall, New England Historic-Genealogical Society, Boston.

By Miss Helen T. Wild, of Medford.

PERCHANCE you have chosen me to speak because you think me in romantic mood, I having spent the past month copying, re-copying and indexing marriages of 1912. Even in modern work a great deal of joy and sorrow, comedy and tragedy comes over the counter into every registrar's office. The people whose heart stories we listen to are almost too near us to enable us to view their experiences in any other than a prosaic light, but the old records have the fascination for the genealogist, amateur or professional, which the stories of our childhood have for the little folks of today.

There is a possibility of a "find" in every old manuscript book, which invites research, and anyone with even limited experience along genealogical or historical lines knows what precious nuggets of information have been found in out-of-the-way places.

Old account books are mines worth careful working.

Modern town clerks are rescuing those of the village doctors of long ago and filing the copies of entries regarding births and deaths with their vital statistics. Old diaries, inventories and letters furnish the personal high lights which enliven the official records. For instance, —a colonel at Valley Forge writes a note to a brother officer asking him to carry a letter to a sweetheart in a far-away home on the Mystic river, referring to the town as "That Mystical place where you are going." We find no marriage record and we know he died at Yorktown. We read that Commodore Hull unsuccessfully sought the hand of a daughter of a house in our neighborhood; that the man she loved played her false and that, in spite of all the other love with which she was surrounded, she died of a broken heart.

The pathetic appeal of an exiled loyalist pleading for the right to return to his home touches a responsive chord in our hearts now that the smoke of battles has rolled away. These incidents concern my own town, and I might mention others, although our history is not at all romantic compared with many others in our Commonwealth. Ordinary research develops so much romance that can be vouched for that I, for one, feel no sympathy with those who draw upon their imagination to vivify historical sketches.

To spend an hour in this perfectly appointed building to consult some printed book is always a profitable recreation. I plead guilty to sitting up with my January Historical Register till I was afraid to look at the clock, quite excited in tracing the ancestry of my brand-new emigrant grandmother, Lydia Hucksteppe. I envied Miss French her ability and opportunity to hunt among old County Kent archives, and was not surprised to hear that some people were impatient for her to move to some other county and give others a chance of solving their riddles.

To read a local history which has been compiled by competent writers is a keen pleasure, but to put it together is literally *never-ending* delight. In my home town

a good history, considering the material then available, was published in 1855. Another was published in 1886, which was a reprint of the first with a supplement brought up to date. We rested on our laurels quite content with ourselves and our knowledge for ten years. Then our Historical Society was formed, and for sixteen years it has published a quarterly of at least twenty-four octavo pages filled with interesting matter untouched by either of the two histories. And some of our writers have dared to contradict the elder historians and have produced the proofs of their statements. Every paper that is published opens new vistas. Last Monday evening I read what I call a lazy paper about the old street where I was born, giving my childhood's memories only. Mention of some eight or ten very old houses has started a desire to know something of their ownership when the town was young. Nobody knows what the search will bring to light. There is material enough if we have time or disposition to delve for it, and if we undertake the task there is plenty of satisfaction for ourselves in store.

The reasons for actions taken in town meetings are sometimes difficult to find, but they can always be traced to some political or commercial situation in the colonies or overseas. To get a true idea of the meaning of our colonial events we should study European history at the same time, and I wish that it were possible to obtain a text-book for children which could, in an interesting and simple way, combine the contemporary history of the world to interpret our own.

To enjoy the true romance of records one must study them in the places where they belong. A copy of a record is a plant in a flower pot; the original in its own town is an old fashioned garden.

Ever since our Historical Society was formed, I have done record work, sometimes for historical purposes and sometimes merely clerical, always in connection with my own family or my birthplace, but in 1911–12 I had the privilege of working in about a dozen Massachusetts towns, and I never enjoyed a year more. I read town

and church archives, and cemetery inscriptions, besides many private and a few court records. The dovetailing of all these showed the wisdom of combining all in compiling vital statistics.

On a perfect June morning two of us drove out from Greenfield to hunt for Bible and graveyard records. In a few minutes we had left the thriving town and were out in the meadows with the winding river on one hand and the Shelburne hills on the other. We stopped first at a little burial ground whose broken headstones were piled up around the walls, but let me say in passing that before the work was finished my energetic companion had hired a man to lift them for her and had copied every inscription. These stones may be reset or carted away, but those records are safe. A little farther on was a comfortable farmhouse where the good lady of the house received us seated on a Sheraton sofa whose money value was nothing to her, but whose worth as an heirloom was priceless. As we copied the death record in her family Bible she told us the story of her kinsfolk who had died in a terrible scourge of typhoid; then, as we went on with marriages and births, she told us the simple annals of the lives of those whose names we wrote.

At another farmhouse the family record was a marvel of fancy printing and decoration, preserved under glass. The experiences of the collectors of old furniture and china are very different from those of the searcher for family records or traditions. At one house we were mistaken for collectors and the door was opened about three inches in response to our knock, but when our errand was understood, courtesy and hospitality were unbounded. The lady not only ransacked her attic for old church records (and she found some very valuable ones which she willingly restored to their rightful owners), but showed us all her ancient treasures in the line of mahogany, china and pewter. This experience was often repeated. People who are old residents of the parent town, love to tell the old traditions which are the background and atmosphere of the written page.

After many inquiries we located, in the outskirts of Greenfield, a little graveyard which was approached through a barn yard; when we at last reached it, we found it enclosed with a four-foot fence. My companion was the better climber, but we both went over it, copied our inscriptions and scrambled out safely; our horse, the only spectator, made no comments.

Going on toward the Bernardston road, we passed by the tablet marking the spot where the martyred Mrs. Williams, of Deerfield, lost her life. The neighborhood seems so remote from habitation, so picturesque and wild, that one can feel the thrill of horror which possessed the little band of captives on that terrible journey.

If you have never been in Heath you have missed one of the gems of Massachusetts towns, although its whole population would not crowd this hall. I went there on business bent and lingered for a vacation. The tiny village is the highest in the State and, across the valleys that surround it, in whatever direction you look, there are billowing mountains. The town clerk is a cyclopædia of tradition. His daughter, who copied the vital records, knows almost as much as he. The stories of the old worthies, told in their inimitable way, was a pleasant diversion from our monotonous chant of long s, short s, cap Born, y-e up, etc. Several entries pertaining to one man astonished me. The dates of his marriages seemed to follow the deaths of his wives with alarming rapidity. I expressed my incredulity, but was convinced when told that the tradition is, that on his way home from his second wife's funeral he proposed to her sister, was accepted, and married number three inside of two weeks. Some village laureate thereupon composed the couplet,

> "He lived a sad and lonely life
> Of thirteen days without a wife."

Rides with the town clerk were a continued story; every house and cellar hole had a tradition. The number of deserted farms is pathetic in all our country towns, but I trust that a better day is dawning and public senti-

ment and scientific farming will work miracles before many years have passed.

The site of Fort Shirley, with its lonely grave of little Anna Norton, who died in 1747 while her father, the chaplain of the chain of forts which guarded our western frontier, was a prisoner in Canada, is the property of the town of Heath. To reach the little tablet, I stumbled over the hillocks which were once entrenchments to guard the log fort and its precious well. I beg you not to try to study the Indian troubles of western Massachusetts before you have visited these places which are very slightly changed, outside of the towns, except by kindly Mother Nature.

The records of deaths which the old pastor of Heath wrote down, cannot fail to cause a feeling of sympathy for those who long ago passed from a life of privation to the life beyond. We wonder how they stood the terrible winters, with no physician and with communication with the river settlements practically cut off. But as we enjoy the clear air, the green pastures and fertile meadows which skirt the water courses, in summer, the lure of the beautiful country possesses us as it did the pioneers.

The memorial inscriptions in the burial grounds of the shore towns are as touching as the chronicles among the hills. "Died at sea," "Wrecked on the coast of China," or similar records we find on every hand, while across the marshes we hear the moan of the sea.

Speaking of Heath reminds me of an incident which came into the experience of a friend of mine. He was searching the archives for the service of a man whom he knew was a resident of Heath (or Charlemont, rather, for the former was not incorporated until after the Revolution). He found no mention of the name except one man from Shirley. Almost by accident he noticed that the company and commander hailed from Charlemont and a comparison of the company roll and the list of so-called Shirley men proved that the clerk of the company had recorded the men from the Fort Shirley district as of Shirley, thereby causing confusion by omitting the

word "Fort." The men who served in the outlying districts of Medford were credited to "Mystic," but as no town of that name existed there is no chance of mistake. Perhaps this allusion to something which is outside of today's subject, may be of use to some puzzled applicant to a patriotic society.

I am not learned in genealogical lore, so it was a pleasant surprise to me to find in Bristol county, last winter, the births of people whose marriages I had read in Hampden county the previous summer. The linking together of histories of localities widely separated invites the student to investigate the reasons for changes in residence of whole communities.

In a little town in Bristol, I unearthed a church quarrel in good and regular standing which had lasted many, many years. There were three church quarrels or secessions in my own town, but next week the two churches which have grown up side by side in consequence will celebrate together the two hundredth anniversary of the founding of the first church in Medford. But there the breach had never healed. I was sent to hunt for the church records which correspondence had failed to bring to light. In a pouring rain I landed in an unfamiliar town, but by the use of my Yankee tongue and by persistent trudging through the mud I located the books, which proved to be valuable. I inveigled the custodian to loan one of them to me so that I might copy the vital records, and that night I slept with it within reach of my hand; but the next day I received notice that I must deposit it with the custodian every night, not on account of danger from fire, which was my *bete-noir*, but because some feared that I might carelessly leave it where someone from the other church might purloin it. Subsequent conversation on both sides of the parish lines, told me how strong a feeling existed and I did not blame the one who was responsible for their safe-keeping for not trusting the volumes too much to the honor of a stranger.

The copyist of ancient manuscripts must eliminate personal comfort and inclination and exercise patience

and perseverance; the owners and custodians are often cranky and the work must be done in their way. Mental reservations and private notes are better and more successful than discussion.

I worked on one old Bristol county record with a congenial spirit, who, although she chafed sometimes at routine work, was never so happy as when, magnifying glass in hand, she was solving some obscure problem.

Some of the old books had long ago dropped to pieces and the leaves had become misplaced. When Emeryized, they had not been arranged in perfect order. One day we discovered that a fragment which was bound in with page twenty-something, was completed many pages farther on. After we had successfully patched the two together we had a regular love feast, which made up for all the differences we may have had as to long, short or medium s, or the proper way of transcribing the bothersome I's and J's. (Truly, the way one book abounded in queer s's and interchangeable I's and J's was enough to try the soul of a saint.)

The very uncertainty of the truth of records adds to their fascination. Most of us have learned by this time not to pin our faith to printed books, but we can scarcely credit the fact that original entries may be wrong.

One town record I firmly believe is only a copy of a church register and therefore less likely to be correct than the private one.

I have compared town records with original returns made by doctors, ministers and undertakers and found discrepancies. (Probably this has been your experience.) Lately several modern mistakes have come to my notice, which were fortunately detected before official reports were made to the State, and they set us wondering how many more went undiscovered. They were simple *clerical* errors, but they might have caused trouble for the genealogist of the twenty-first century. A doctor, in reporting a birth interchanged the names of father and son —a literal rendering of "The child is father to the man!"

A clergyman wrote a bridegroom's name McDonald for Donnelly on a marriage return. If he had not written the father's name properly and in full, there would have been no way of detecting the existence of an error.

These are modern instances, but who believes that our forefathers were more perfect than their children?

As we read the records we grow very well acquainted with the dead and gone town clerks. We sometimes call them familiarly by their given names. We like John because he was such a good writer, mending his quill pen when it needed it, crossing his t's and dotting his i's when and where he ought, but we grow very much out of patience with Jeremiah, because he persisted in signing himself T Cler, Town Clerk, or T Clk just to catch us napping, it seems to us who are trying to make a literal copy. Sometimes the ancient worthies took snuff; we find a few grains between the leaves of their books, and often the sand from the sand box glistens in the light. Here and there the recorder makes a pungent comment, giving us a hint of his own character as well as that of his contemporaries.

If one cannot find amusement or human interest in old records, if he cannot forget the so much an hour in the interest he has in translating or recording, he would better change his occupation; but if he looks for hidden meanings, if he enjoys fitting seemingly unimportant fact or even hints together to make up the whole fabric of the history or statistics upon which he is laboring, he has his reward, he has found his romance.

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## THE BROOK'S MANSION GONE.

THREE years since, the REGISTER, under the caption "Passing of a Medford Estate," made note of some of the features of the ancestral home of the Brooks family on Grove street. Since then new streets have been opened and houses erected, in number upward of fifty, and of these but few are for two families. The stone

walls along High and Grove streets are largely removed, the carriage stable utilized (in another location) for a storehouse, and within recent days the mansion house has been demolished. A visit to the grounds reveals a scene of wreck, in marked contrast to the once stately residence and well-kept grounds that housed four generations for over a century.

Few pictures of it have ever come to our knowledge. First, the steel engraving by F. C. Stuart in Brooks' History of Medford, from a drawing by A. L. Rawson. This does not show the wing that extended westerly and which was three stories in height, while the main house was but two. This would lead to the inference that the wing was of a later construction.* (A peculiarity of the engraving is that it reproduces itself by contact with the opposite page.) Then, in the REGISTER alluded to, is a distant view of the mansion from another point, as the background of the Indian monument as it was first located. This view was from the south-east, while the former was from north-east. The illustration of this issue shows the front from Grove street and was secured at about the time of the removal of the last Brooks family.

The house was built in the early years of the nineteenth century, perhaps begun in 1802 and finished in 1806, as nearly as we can learn. In its mode of construction the workmen of today might well take lessons, but the like of its lumber they have not used, nor ever will. Its hewn timbers were of pine and the same style of framing was followed in the partitions as in the outer walls, and the posts and beams were of generous size. The nails used to secure the covering boards and finish were all hand made, for this was all executed before the invention of nail-making machinery. The modern planing and moulding machines found no place in any part of its construction. The builders of those days had to take their material in the rough, and they knew how to do it. It was an art — the making of everything and the skilful joining of every part — that but few of the mechanics of today know of. But it took time to do work

* The wing was added at a later date.

thus, and so it is not surprising that four years elapsed ere the house was complete and ready for occupancy.

Its owner and first occupant was in his time reputed to be the wealthiest man in New England, and, what is more to the point, had amassed his fortune in honorable, legitimate business. The mansion completed, he retired, and for over forty years made this his summer home. While the mansion was in building the Middlesex canal was opened across his lands, and thirty-three years later came the railway. The former he spanned by a beautiful arch of granite, that his descendants kept intact long after the "highway of the waters" vanished, but which is now a thing of the past. Near the house were venerable oaks, spreading elms and ever-green pines, the growth of many years. To these, and along his borders, Mr. Brooks added many others; and so the grounds came to be a place of beauty as the years passed on. But in the development of a modern residence section the stately mansion of a century ago was not adapted, and, impracticable to remodel, it has succumbed to inevitable fate.

Its occupants for the century have been good citizens, generous and helpful, and are remembered as such. A few weeks more and the last vestige of the house so well and favorably known will have disappeared, new streets been opened and the homes of new-comers taken the place of the mansion house of Peter Chardon Brooks on Grove street.

—M. W. M.

## HOW HIGH STREET WAS NAMED.

One would like to know where and how High street got its name. The selectmen in 1829 undertook to legalize this name, but it probably had long borne the name, *de facto*.

In earliest times there were only the Cradock buildings in the town pump region (but no High street and no bridge). These buildings had to be *there* for central administration of the governor's property, and on the nearest

site to the only ford, which offered sufficient level space. There was no retaining wall or filling at the river; all was normal, unchanged by man. The earliest travellers west from the ford passed along the narrow path on the verge, just above high-water mark, and east bound ones along the gravel beach to the Cradock buildings. This was a "varge-way," just as New England country folks call it now. Maybe, when long ago, in some easterly storm and swirling tide, the varge-way could not be used, a potato cart struggled over the great bastion (or bluff of the hill) and its driver named it (and rightly, too, a high street or way) and the name held. We may well conclude that High street name owed its existence to our potato cart and its successors and not to the county of Middlesex.

—THOMAS M. STETSON.

In Woburn (settled by Edward Johnson and others as Charlestown village in 1640) the earliest streets, *i.e.*, roads, were *Up-street* and *Hilly-way*. These settlers went thither, without doubt, *via* the "Ford at Mistick," the "Varge-way" and Brooks' corner. Their Up-street was a gradual rise, and their Hilly-way a counterpart of the grades of Medford's *high* street.

EDITOR.

## IN THE INTEREST OF ACCURACY.

There should have been mentioned on page 21 of this volume, a two story gambrel roofed house standing end to High street between the Governor Brooks house and the big tree. This house was afterward removed to Mystic avenue. Also on page 22, the fire engine house should have been located between the "cottage painted straw color" and the "old Grace church." We hope some time to present a series of old photos of this locality subsequent to 1870. Since our last issue the ruined house next Mystic street (page 18) has been taken down and is no longer a "blot on the scene."

EDITOR.

## ELISHA BRIGGS CURTIS, 1835-1915.

" Still in short intervals of pleasing woe,
Regardful of the friendly dues I owe;
I to the glorious dead forever dear,
Indulge the tribute of a grateful tear." —*Pope.*

It is but an act of homage amid the activities of life in short intervals of quiescent being, to pause, and to inscribe a feeble tribute of recognition to an honored and worthy member of this Society, Elisha Briggs Curtis.

Mr. Curtis was born in Marshfield in 1835, and was one of the direct descendants of John and Priscilla Alden. In early youth he came to Medford and received his preliminary education in our public schools. When a young man he was engaged in the shipping business in Boston, and later, at about thirty years of age, became associated with the Second National Bank of Boston, which position he faithfully and honorably filled for a period of twenty-five years, retiring from active mercantile affairs in 1890.

In 1863 he was married to Miss Lucia J. Leadbetter of Monmouth, Maine, and they made their home in Chelsea, Mass., until about 1885, when they came to Medford, residing at the old homestead on Pleasant street until their decease.

Mr. Curtis was exceedingly familiar with the history of Medford, and his reminiscences of the early days of shipbuilding, the old stage-coach, the Middlesex canal, the cyclone and damage done to certain parts of the town, and landmarks long since demolished, were most entertaining, and it may be said of him that whenever called upon to give an informal talk upon Medford's past, he never failed to have a fund of interesting incidents of the early days to draw upon.

Elisha B. Curtis was a familiar figure in our midst,—dignified, erect, with a poise which reflected his lineage and a countenance which conveyed a strong and reflecting mind. He was respected and honored by his fellow citizens who showed their appreciation of his manliness and integrity by electing him to the common council

when the town first became a city. In his religious life those who were more closely associated with him felt the impress of the real dignity, quality and magnitude of his being; he was an industrious student of the Scriptures which was manifest in his expositions at the family prayer circle of the church. He was a most cautious adviser, leaning a little too much on the side of ultra-conservatism at times, but always in brotherly concord with the majority. As a deacon of his church he was an example to all, and was everywhere known as a man of high ideals and principles, sympathetic, kindly and of a most magnanimous spirit.

As a member of this Society he took an active part in its deliberations and was interested in all the plans for its welfare. His fund of knowledge of the early days was appreciated here as elsewhere, and his association with the members is a delightful experience long to be remembered.

In 1904 Mr. Curtis' wife died, and he on March 26, 1915. Two daughters, Mrs. H. H. Smith, of Lawrence, Mass., and Miss Alice E. Curtis, of this city, survive him.

—P. W. A.

## MEDFORD MARKET-PLACE MADE MODERN.

A half century ago the ancient home of Dr. Tufts and that across Forest street, where was once the Cotting bakery, were standing, and the "town pump in working order." Spot pond water came later with the stone water trough now gone. The railway station and some store fronts have been changed a little, the Bigelow building and Tufts hall have replaced those named. Otherwise the surroundings of the old Medford market-place are the same today. The near future will witness a marked change; indeed it has already begun. The "Withington bakery," for several years disused, has been demolished and a theater and business block is there building. Tufts hall, built by Dr. Weymouth in '72, the brick building adjoining and the Seccomb house

of 1756 (recently known as the City Hall Annex) have all been sold and are all to be removed and a modern business building erected.

It is to be hoped that the good taste manifested so long ago by the builders between Salem and old Ship street, and more recently at the opposite corner of Forest street, in reducing the street corners to easy curves, may be there displayed. A similar opportunity will offer itself in the proposed widening of Riverside avenue. That being done, it will only remain for the city of Medford to cure what need *not* be endured, by the purchase of its neighbors' holdings on both sides of the ancient but much maligned City Hall, and erect on their sites a substantial municipal building such as may spread its protecting mantle over the less beautiful neighbors' defects. Then Medford square "bigger, better and busier" may be made modern, and creditably too. Will this latter ever be history?

---

## THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S SALE AND REMOVAL.

The home of the Medford Historical Society has felt the shock of upheaval, has been sold, and at this moment the work of transformation for business purposes is in progress.

At the November meeting of this Society it was voted to sell its realty, at the discretion of the Executive Committee. Various offers were received, some so insignificant as to be ridiculous, but on May 26 last, by the unanimous approval of the committee, a sale was made to Edmund T. Steere, of Melrose, and the agreement thereto signed by him and by the President and Treasurer of the Society.

With this issue of the REGISTER, the familiar cover page design (showing the house) will cease, as the Historical Society has moved its library and collection into temporary quarters, thus vacating the historic house that for eighteen years has been its home, first by rental and in 1902 by purchase.

The new owner will change the same by two stores on the ground floor with modern accessories of plate glass, etc., but will as far as possible preserve the old style exterior of the upper portion so familiar to Medford people.

The present REGISTER is sent out from the new location — the site of Governor Cradock's "ferme house" by the way — the quarters secured at No. 6 Main street. These can be but temporary (as changes are contemplated on Riverside avenue) but for the *immediate* future are well adapted both for our library and collection and for a meeting place until plans can be made for a future home. "It is hoped that a fireproof building will be forthcoming, where the library and choice collection of antiques can be properly housed, and to this end active work will soon begin. The people will be asked to assist in preserving Medford's history, and by their moral and financial aid to place the Medford Historical Society in a position second to none in the state."

In some quarters an idea has obtained, that historical societies are worshippers of things old, worn out, and useless; also that "Medford is too —— historical" (the adjective we omit.) This Historical Society does *not* exist for the "preservation of old foot-stoves and spinning wheels." Neither has it any interest in the preservation of the numerous old rattletraps and rookeries that (*dis*) grace our streets and have long been eyesores to the public, other than by photos to show what has been, to the newer and better Medford. There is room for better things on the ground they cumber.

As the sale of the house occurred just after the last meeting of the season, and is doubtless still unknown to some members, as soon as we are "settled in housekeeping" all will be apprised of the fact, and an early meeting be held, to which friends will be invited.

Many pleasant memories will be held of our former home, and brief mention of its history and occupants is timely.

Convers Francis served an apprenticeship in Medford, learning the art and trade of a baker of Capt. Ebenezer Hall. He became the captain's foreman for some years and was in business two years at Menotomy. At his former master's desire he succeeded him in 1797, and himself retired at the age of fifty-two, with what was then a fortune, $50,000. He soon erected (in 1800, it is said) a substantial house, that has these historic interests: *First*, that there his talented daughter, Lydia Maria (by marriage, Child), was born February 11, 1802. See Vol. III, p. 95, REGISTER, therefor. *Second*, that the "Medford Cracker" was there designed and first made. All work incident thereto was for many years by hand. "This bread deserved all the fame it acquired," and as each little loaf, because of its peculiar making, split in halves, it got the name, *crackers*.

Mr. Francis faced his house to the sun, with its front door on Salem street, the rear reached by a path, later called Blanchard's lane, now Ashland street. Further back a brick building contained his ovens.

After he retired, Timothy Brigden, "whose bread was excellent," was baker for a time, but in 1829 Henry Withington used the ovens until his own were built.

Capt. Andrew Blanchard, Jr., had, ere this, purchased the Francis house and the older ones westward. The latter he sold to Withington, reserving certain rights and prohibiting certain acts on part of the land. Exercising those rights he made alterations improving the house, residing there until his death in 1853. For a brief time Alfred A. Pierce was its owner, and next, in 1866, Charles P. Lauriat, the well-known gold-beater, who used the brick oven-building as a workshop. By inheritance it passed to his children, and from some of them to the Historical Society in June, 1902. Here's hoping that its solid brick walls may long stand, housing honorable and legitimate business on old Salem street, worthily succeeding those gone before.

Vol. XVIII.] [No. 3.

# Historical Register

JULY, 1915

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**FORM OF BEQUEST.**

I give and bequeath to the Medford Historical Society, in the city of Medford, Mass., the sum of _____ Dollars for the general use and purposes of said Society.

(Signed) _____


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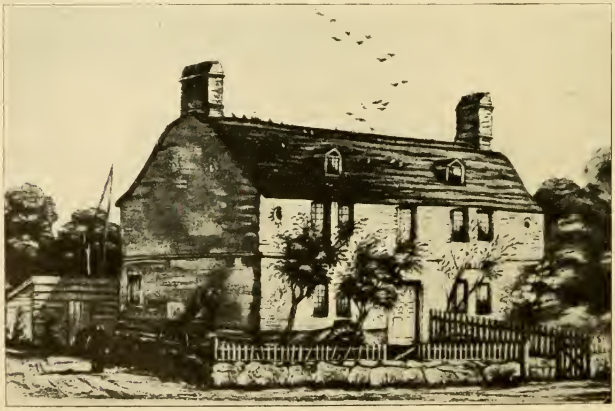
WITHINGTON BAKERY.



PETER TUFTS HOUSE.

# The Medford Historical Register.

Vol. XVIII. JULY, 1915. No. 3.

## THE WITHINGTON BAKERY.

DURING the first week in May the old buildings so long the home of the Medford cracker and baking industry were demolished. The vine-clad dwelling, with its latticed entrance, and the quaint old gambrel-roofed store and the sheds containing the ovens are all gone. The place is a scene of busy activity in the erection of the theatre which is to cater to the amusement-seeking public. The local press has furnished a description of this (which promises to be first class and up-to-date), and says that the old building is believed to date back to 1670. Mr. Usher, in his history, said (which we doubt) in 1886 that it was over 230 years, which would place it prior to 1656, thus antedating the earliest authentic house in Medford.

Be that as it may, they were two very old houses, and it is not in the scope of this article to work out the problem of their genesis, nor yet of the alterations, additions and moving thither that brought them into their final and familiar shape. It is of the business there conducted and of its promoters that we deal, now a timely subject.

There have been three Henry Withingtons. The first appears on the Medford tax list first in 1799, and lived in the old brick building called the "College," which faced the river on "the way to Blanchard's," afterward called Ship street. There the second Henry was born on August 9, 1800, just prior to the beginning of ship building by Thatcher Magoun. The old mill beside the river, and the lighters and molasses-laden vessels to the distillery, had his boyish attention, and perhaps he may have assisted his father at the toll-gate on the Andover

turnpike a mile from the market-place. Evidently his youthful mind did not fix itself on his father's trade, that of a cordwainer or shoemaker, for he found employment in the household of Hon. Timothy Bigelow. As "scullion," he styled himself, and perhaps his service in Squire Bigelow's house inclined him to what became his lifelong occupation. In recent years his successors placed on their sign, "Established 1825."

Henry Withington had never learned the trade or business of a baker by apprenticeship, but with good judgment gained by observation, "took up" the occupation, and with a partner, and employing experienced help, started in business in that year. The ovens that Withington and Lane used were those of some earlier baker and were located in the rear of Mr. Barker's house. This house was moved beyond Gravelly brook in 1846 to make room for the Mystic church.

After two years Mr. Lane went out and Mr. Withington continued in business by himself. But on December 25, 1827, he took in another partner, as he married Eunice Blanchard, daughter of the famous Medford innkeeper, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. Caleb Stetson, who had early in that year begun a pastorate in Medford of twenty-one years. They came to live in the house on Salem street, across River street from the ancient burial ground, which was over thirty years ago moved next the common.

In 1830 Mr. Withington moved into the old house now demolished, leasing it for five years. He had then a daughter, born April 20, 1829. He transferred his baking operations to the shop and ovens formerly of Convers Francis, which were in the rear of the Francis residence, on a lane that has since become Ashland street.

At the expiration of his lease he had so well established himself that he purchased the houses he occupied (and where his son Henry was born on August 30, 1832), together with the land extending backward and on which the new theatre is being built. Andrew Blanchard was

then the owner, as also of the Francis residence, lately the Medford Historical Society's building.

Henry Withington subsequently erected in the rear of his purchased home, buildings suitable for his purpose and to house the two new ovens he built, and in later years added another oven to the plant. Up to 1840 all the bakery work was done by hand, but in 1845 he purchased machinery for making crackers. The old process was interesting. A small piece of dough was rolled under each palm, thus making two at a time. These were flattened by a rolling-pin and docked, *i.e.*, pricked by hand. This latter was done by the children. It caused the mass to split in the middle, otherwise it would rise like a biscuit. The steam generated in the baking dough passed out through the holes, and left the mass adhering at the edge and easily separated or cracked — hence the name, *crackers*. Mr. Withington did not originate the Medford cracker. That was done by Convers Francis, who in 1797 succeeded his former master, Ebenezer Hall, in business at Medford, and continued therein some twenty years, when he retired. After him there were several other bakers in Medford, and the establishing of the business in 1825 by Mr. Withington seems to have been a "survival of the fittest."

The Medford invention of Mr. Francis seems not to have suffered in any wise, under the Withington manufacture, and its fame became more extended and his product an article of export. A Medford traveller found "Medford Crackers" in the shops of London in 1834.

In those days fagots were principally used to heat the ovens. They were furnished by the farmers and others who cleared land. They were mostly of birch sprouts, which, bundled and withe bound, brought two cents a bunch, and made a brisk fire. After the third oven was built, "trash" wood, in four-foot lengths, was used, and still later, coal. A bulky load of fagots, hauled by a yoke of oxen guided by the goad in the hand of a farmer lad in a long blue frock, would be a novelty in Medford

square today, but was frequently seen in the old "market-place."

In 1862 the third Henry Withington, whose birth has been mentioned, succeeded to the business. He, also, "took it up," his father assisting, and enlarged the same, adding other machinery and removing one of the earlier ovens. In place of this he erected a rotary oven and introduced a steam engine, supplanting the horse-power of previous years. This oven had an iron frame, with soapstone shelves, that in its turning brought the bread nearer the door for removal. The amount of flour used was largely increased, amounting to upwards of forty barrels weekly. Before the invention of later grinding machinery, winter wheat was considered best, but after, flour from spring wheat was the more satisfactory.

Beside crackers the elder Withington made the standard brick loaf, the two-cent roll, cakes with sugar, molasses gingerbread, seed-cakes and buns. The younger added oyster, oatmeal, graham and soda biscuit to the cracker list, and various kinds of pies. Of the latter, Washington was the specialty. He used, in August, to lay in a season's supply of raspberry jam, a half ton in hundred-pound cans. This pie was of the *George* variety, as in those days the *Booker* had not attained the present popularity.

To keep the output of the bakery ready on time, there was a night and day force of workmen. Brown bread was made in four sizes, ten to forty cents, and sold whole, half or quarter. Six hundred and fifty loaves were sold on Sunday, but no beans, *i.e.*, they were not in the stock. But if they "didn't know beans" in stock, they did in the oven, for more than one hundred Medford housewives sent theirs prepared for baking on Saturday evening, and received a tin check therefor. The check number was chalked on the bean-pots, and the payment of ten cents secured the finished product for the Sunday breakfast and the beans went to the right spot. The writer remembers walking from his home a mile and a half away

in his first year of housekeeping in 1870 — a half loaf sufficed for two — and wrapped in that old-time brown paper kept his hands warm on the homeward journey; and it tasted good, too. Five hundred to one thousand loaves of bread daily was the usual amount made, reaching one thousand four hundred at one time.

Five teams were on the road, and in the younger man's time shipments were made to New Hampshire and Maine. The local teams had regular routes and customers, and the baker's wagon's coming was heralded by the jingling of sleigh bells worn by the horses the year round.

Many of the grown-ups of Medford will recall their weekly errand to the old bakery for "baker's yeast," and the big tub brought into the shop and ladled out by the "cent's worth" to the waiting crowd.

Mr. Withington sold out to Ewen McPherson in 1885, and he later to Mr. Barker, who some years ago gave up the business, since which time little or nothing has been done there, the last occupants of the shop being the Order of Moose, whatever that may be. The dwelling was occupied until the last, the occupants only removing after the wrecking force had begun operations.

The old bakery in its palmy days was "the real thing." It may not seem so to the observer, whose gauge mark is the "Sunshine," or the "Thousand Windows," but in the truer comparison of times, means and market, it was a noted, successful business enterprise, a credit to the proprietors and the old historic town in which it flourished.

Mr. Henry Withington (the third) still lives but a few rods away, is hale and hearty, and for twenty-two years has faithfully served his native city as one of the Board of Assessors, is still at his post, doing as faithful, honorable work there as in the old days and old bakery, which is now only a memory.

— MOSES W. MANN.

NOTE. — I am indebted to Miss E. M. Gill for notes of information collected by her, relative to the bakery.

TURELL TUFTS AND HIS FAMILY CONNECTIONS.

DR. SIMON TUFTS, JR. (1727–1786) married Lucy Dudley (1727–1768), February 23, 1749. Their children were Simon, born April 7, 1750; Lucy, born April 11, 1752; Katherine, born April 25, 1754. The first became a merchant in the East Indies and died at the Cape of Good Hope in 1802. Lucy married Benjamin Hall, Jr. (1754–1807), November 22, 1777. Their home is still standing, just east of Governors avenue.

Dr. Tufts' second wife was Elizabeth Hall, who was born May 15, 1743, and whom he married October 5, 1769. She was the daughter of Hon. Stephen Hall (1704–1786), who was representative to the General Court, 1751, 1763. The children by this union were Turell, born 1770, died 1842, unmarried; Cotton, born 1772, died 1835, was insane for forty-four years; Hall, born 1775, died 1801, at Surinam; Hepsibah, born 1777; Stephen, born 1779, died young.

"His sons by the second wife were fond of gaiety, and were said to be rebellious to their father, who is said to have been severe towards them."

The home of this family, erected 1709 and taken down 1867, was on the corner of Main and Forest streets. A view of it was published in the April REGISTER, 1909. Letters written by some of these children have been published at different times in the REGISTER.

Turell Tufts, who made the speech of welcome to Lafayette, belonged to a family prominent in the business and social life of the town for many years. On the maternal side he was the fifth generation from John Hall, the first of this family to establish a home in Medford; and in what was once called the Old Garrison House, descendants of the eighth and ninth generation are living today, while the tenth generation is also represented in the city. In this same house Lucy Tufts, after her marriage to Benjamin Hall, made her early home. Turell Tufts on the paternal side was fifth in the line of descent from Peter Tufts of Malden, whose son, Captain Peter,

settled in Medford. The husband of his half-sister, Lucy, was also descended from the John Hall to whom his mother traced her line.

Turell Tufts was selectman, 1820–1825 and 1827–1828. He served the town as its treasurer in 1827. In 1824 he was fence viewer, on the committee to audit the treasurer's books, was chosen moderator in absence of Dudley Hall, who was first chosen, and was representative to the General Court. He had forty-nine votes to Mr. Hall's fifty-six, and there was a third candidate. The following year, with others, he was on the committee to petition the Legislature in behalf of the new bridge over Charles river from Charlestown to Boston; again selectman, and on the committee to audit the treasurer's report.

We of today should remember him with gratitude for his gifts to the town, one of five hundred dollars for shade trees, some of which, planted on the highway we know as Forest street, have made it the most beautiful one in our city, admired by all who have passed that way; and the other to the Social Library, the benefits of which have descended to us through the channels of the Public Library, into which the former was absorbed. He gave to the First Parish two silver cans for the communion table and the portrait of Rev. Ebenezer Turell, the second pastor of the church, whose name he bore. From his own portrait Turell Tufts looks down upon us from the library wall of our local Historical Society. This portrait was the gift of his grandnephew in a half degree, the late Dudley C. Hall, who named a child of his, who died young, for this distant relative. This short account of Turell Tufts is fortunately supplemented by that interesting one from the pen of the late James A. Hervey, in his delightful "Reminiscences of an Earlier Medford" in July REGISTER, 1901.

Turell's father was agent for Colonel Royall's estate after the latter left in 1775. His mother is described as being "a commanding, portly looking lady, with a handsome double chin." After reading such a statement

we realize that standards of taste vary. She used to tell the story of receiving a polite bow from Washington on the occasion of his visit to Medford (1789) when she was "gaily dressed for the occasion." She was then forty-six years old, and as widow of the doctor of the town probably a woman of importance, a strong character, besides being a woman of property, which she inherited from her father. After a widowhood of nine years, her children being no longer young, at the age of sixty-two she married, July 12, 1795, Captain Duncan Ingraham of Concord, who came to Medford to live. The Ingrahams lived for a while in a house of the colonial type on High street, which later became the site of our first high school building, which housed the high school and a grammar school.

Mr. Ingraham died in 1811 and his age is stated as eighty, and also as eighty-eight. Mrs. Ingraham died in 1830, aged eighty-seven. Where she lived after her second husband's death I am unable to say, but the house above mentioned was afterwards occupied by Hatter Hall, so called, and in 1824 by John Howe.*

Mrs. Ingraham belonged to that band of charitable and kind-hearted gentlewomen of Medford who regularly supplied Marm Betty, the poor and aged schoolmistress of Medford, with food. Mrs. Ingraham sent on Thursdays.†

Mrs. Ingraham, as a woman of means, was probably a good business woman for investments, or she had the advice of her son, Turell Tufts, who was well versed in town affairs. A broadside of the town expenses, when such were printed on a single sheet, shows in the miscellaneous account,‡ March 19, 1825, to April 18, 1826,

* For several years following her husband's death there is evidence that Elizabeth Ingraham occupied three-quarters of some house and the remainder was occupied by others at the same time, namely, Joseph Burrage and Benjamin Tufts.

† Marm Betty had a room in the old bakery, as we knew it. At that time there was a small door on the south side, of ordinary size, close to the east end.

‡ In this same account there was paid to Turell Tufts one year's interest on second donation to January 1, 1825, $42; one year's interest on second donation to January 1, 1826, $42.

that she was paid one year's interest on note of $400, $24; on note of $250, $15.

It is hardly fair, after having given so much space to his wife and her son Turell, to pass over Duncan Ingraham without a word, and if we do we shall lose much, for he had a marked individuality. There was a touch of the picturesque in his life, and if he came here with the same air he had in Concord he must have filled quite a space in the town's horizon. At this time he was nearly seventy years of age.

He was a wealthy retired Boston merchant, a widower with a family of children when he moved to Concord. Of English birth, undoubtedly, inclined to Toryism, an owner of slaves and probably a dealer in them, in that quiet village he made quite a stir. On account of his political views he was subjected to disagreeable experiences, such as having a sheep's head and pluck hung on his new chaise, and being treated to a mock serenade when he entertained British officers. He was brusque in manner and his speech was of the rugged kind savoring of the rough life of the sea, not always fit for ears polite. He was fond of display and luxurious living. With another member of similar tastes he was the cause of breaking up for a while the famous club of Concord known as the Social Society and later as the Social Circle. This club was formed on a high plane, and its members were pledged to moderation in drink at their gatherings and to the serving of no refreshments. Ingraham deviated from this frugal line and served such elaborate and expensive suppers that he broke up the club, but it was reorganized.

He built a colonial house on the road to Walden, but this large three-story house disappeared long ago, though in Thoreau's time there were traces of it and of the homes of several of his slaves whom he had allowed to build near by. That author says, "East of my bean-field, across the road, lived Cato Ingraham, slave of Duncan Ingraham, Esquire, gentleman, of Concord village who

built his slave a house, and gave him permission to live in Walden Woods."

He served on the town committees and was Concord's representative, 1788–1791. As the success of the American cause grew his feelings became less ardent for the Tory side. In Brooks' History of Medford a very interesting story is told of a slave of Ingraham's son Nathaniel.

Several of Duncan's children made their names known in the world in various ways. A daughter married an Episcopal clergyman. Another daughter married an Englishman and her daughter was the mother of Captain Marryat, the English novelist.

Another son, Duncan junior, was a merchant in Boston. "The Acts and Resolves of the Province of Massachusetts Bay," Vol. V, gives Duncan Ingraham, Jr., as one of the signers of a petition to Governor Hutchinson, May, 1773, in regard to auctioneers selling goods at private sale. Boston records show that he was chosen one of the clerks of the market, March 14, 1774, and also on March 29, 1776, when he was excused.

His name is found on the rolls of 1772 of the Boston Cadets, and he was clerk of the company in 1774 and as such inserted notices in several Boston newspapers. The following appeared in the *Massachusetts Gazette* and the *Boston Post-Boy and Advertiser* under date of August 22–29, 1774:—

MESSIEURS MILLS AND HICKS.

The Late Dismission of Col. Hancock from the Command of the Cadets, with the Dissolusion of that Corps consequent thereon, having occasioned much Speculation, and many imperfect Accounts, in Order to prevent further Misrepresentations you are desir'd to insert the following which may be depended on.

Your humble Servant

DUNCAN INGRAHAM JUN. *Clerk*

By order of the Company.

Then follow letters concerning Hancock's removal by Gage, a letter by Hancock stating his dismissal, the company's notice of the same, Hancock's and Gage's letters.

We may presume from the office he occupied at this time that Duncan junior's political sentiments were not like his father's.

Nathaniel Ingraham had a son named Duncan who excited admiration for his espousal of the cause of the Hungarian refugee Martin Koszta, in 1854, when as commander of a United States sloop of war he sheltered the refugee and cleared the deck for action in the harbor of Trieste. It is said this act is proudly remembered by naval officers. For rescuing this Hungarian so boldly he gained a world notoriety and popularity, and was presented by the working classes of England with a chronometer inscribed, "Presented to Captain Ingraham, of the United States Navy, by some thousands of the British working classes, for his noble conduct in rescuing Martin Koszta, the Hungarian refugee, from the Austrian authorities, April, 1854." Koszta had declared his intention to become an American citizen, and his seizure first by Austrians and then by this American naval officer nearly led to serious complications between Austria and our country.

When we consider the turmoil Europe is in today and the complications caused by political issues we may be devoutly thankful that there was a peaceful ending to this episode. We admire the bravery of the man, once a Medford school boy, who even then showed his mettle, but our feeling, perhaps, wanes a little when we recall his later naval career. He was commander of a Confederate iron-clad in Charleston harbor in our Civil war, and is said to have been "more than necessarily active." His death was chronicled a few years ago in the *Boston Transcript.*

Mrs. Ingraham's brother, Willis Hall (1733–1812), had a daughter Mary (1772–1853) who married Dr. Luther Stearns, December 20, 1798. His daughter Elizabeth (1801–1862) married George W. Porter, February 17, 1824. They were the parents of the late Helen Porter, who died in 1899 at the age of seventy.

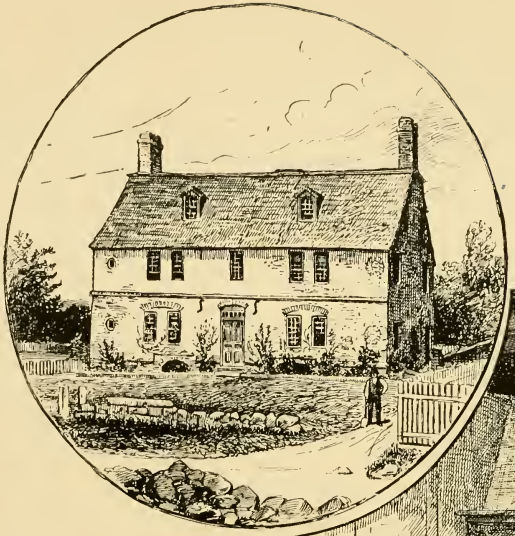
While serving as pastor of the Mystic Church in this town Rev. Elias Nason wrote the life of Sir Charles Henry Frankland. In it he stated that the Agnes Surriage fan came through the Porter family, and that it bore the original owner's name. The latter statement is not correct, and Miss Porter, who owned the fan, told me in regard to the former statement that it came not through the Porter, but through the Stearns family. Mrs. Ingraham's fan keeps company with Agnes Surriage's fan in a Medford family.

—ELIZA M. GILL.

## THE TUFTS FAMILY RESIDENCES.

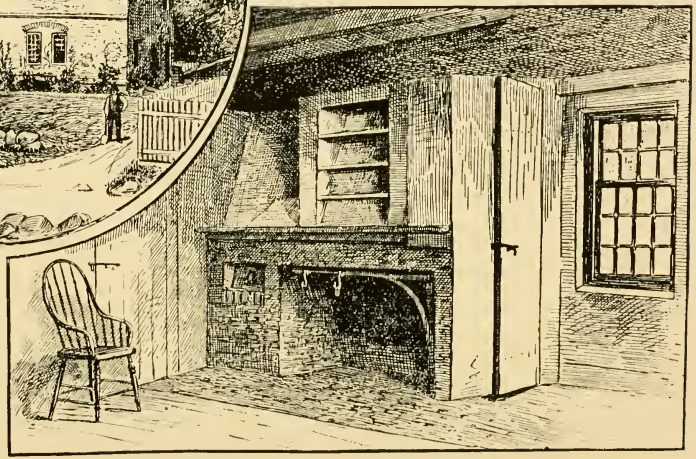
THE name of Tufts will ever be associated with Medford because of the college that crowns Walnut-tree hill, but its association began two centuries and a half ago in the purchase of Medford lands by that Peter Tufts who was born in England in 1617 and came over at about 1640. He died in 1700 and was buried in the ancient church-yard of Malden, of which town he was made a freeman in 1665. He had three sons and seven daughters. The sons' descendants numbered (in the incomplete genealogical table of sixty years ago) nearly four hundred.

In his declining years, and after his eldest and second sons had arrived at manhood, he built a dwelling in Medford, which probably surpassed most of its time for style and durability of construction. His eldest son, Peter, was but twenty-eight years old, and but a few years resident in town, when he was chosen one of the selectmen and captain of the military company, and thirteen years later deputy to the General Court. At about this latter time we find him building a pew in the first meeting-house, in the best location. All these were honors not carelessly bestowed, and ever afterward he was known as Captain Peter. This second Peter Tufts was thrice married and had eight sons and ten daughters, three of whom, with one son, died in infancy. The sixth son (the thir-



THE PETER TUFTS HOUSE.

Built about 1680.



ONE OF THE OLD FIREPLACES AND CLOSETS

Reproduced from *Carpentry and Building*, N. Y., 1884.

teenth child, born 1700, graduated at Harvard College, 1724) was Simon Tufts, the first physician of Medford. Dr. Green (see Vol. I, No. 4, REGISTER) notes that he was born in Medford, but omits to tell us where.

We are led to inquire why it was that in the published History of Medford no mention was made of the home or residence of a man so prominent in town affairs as was the second Peter Tufts, Medford's *first* representative in the General Court. And further, why for the half century prior to 1904 was the Tufts family domicile lost sight of? In the interest of historic truth, supported by laborious search and painstaking care, rather than hasty arrival at pleasant fiction, published, oft quoted and for fifty years accepted (because no one questioned it), we assert that if Simon Tufts, the future physician, was born at home, *i.e.*, in his father's house, his birthplace was "*the old two-story brick house* in East Medford."

Prior to 1854 there had been few local or town histories written or published. Of Medford's (Brooks', 1855) Mr. Usher says, "The book was one of the earliest contributions to New England's municipal history." In that work Mr. Brooks devoted two pages to "the old two-story brick house on Ship street," calling it "one of the most precious relics of antiquity in New England." This was under this italicized caption, *Governor Cradock's House.* He said "That it was built by Mr. Cradock soon after the arrival of his company, . . . will appear from the following facts."

Let us look at the "facts" he produces.

First. "The land was given to Mr. Cradock." So was a strip about four miles along the river.

Second. "When the heirs of Mr. Cradock gave a deed, 1652, they mentioned houses, barns, and many other buildings, but did not so specify these objects as to render them cognizable by us." "There is no deed of this house given by any other person." By the latter we presume prior to 1652 is meant. The mention of houses, etc., is no proof that "the two-story brick house" was then built.

Third. "There was no other person who could own it." True, if the house existed in 1652, but so far no proof that it did is given.

Fourth. "It was on Mr. Cradock's land." Was it? Mr. Brooks thus writes in 1854 or 1855 (two centuries after the time of what he asserts), *but he cites no evidence or witnesses.* (By this we mean for the existence of the house.)

Fifth. "Just where his business made it necessary." Is there any evidence that Mr. Cradock's business interests centered *at that point*, so far away from the trail or path leading from Salem to Boston, *via* the ford at Mystick and the bridge he later built?

He then adds, "The conclusion, therefore, is inevitable that Mr. Cradock built it." It would be inevitable if that particular house was *surely* there *prior to 1652*, but there is no evidence that it was there then. The assertion by a writer two hundred years later, even though unquestioned or undisputed for fifty years as this has been, does not make the same a fact.

No candid reader of Medford's history will doubt that Mr. Cradock had a house built at about 1634, "where his business made it necessary," and that such early structure may have been still standing and sold with barns and land in 1652, as above mentioned. The careful observer of ancient buildings, their mode of construction and capability of endurance, is at once skeptical of such claim of antiquity as Mr. Brooks in his enthusiasm for Medford's "*invaluable historical jewel*" made, and which pleasant fiction was all too readily accepted. But having made the assumption at the start, and next the assertion that it was so, he fixed the date at 1634, because there was clay thereabout, and bricks had been made in Salem a few years earlier. He says nothing about the lime of the mortar with which this brick house was built, but does elsewhere tell the authenticated story of Governor Winthrop's stone house across the river, that fell down only a few years before because of clay mortar used as *no lime could be had.*

Another argument he makes in the query is, "Who, in that day, could afford to build such a house but the rich London merchant? He was the only man then who had the funds to build such a house," which does not prove that he used his funds thus, or built "such a house." It would be remarkable (could it be proven) that in 1634 the first house to be erected in Medford was of a type and material so enduring as is this "old brick house," no examples of which exist anywhere else, or were built anywhere else at that early date, or for fifty years subsequent thereto. Indeed, such a building would rival the first town house of Boston, built in 1657, twenty-three years later.

Having thus assumed, asserted and inevitably concluded, Mr. Brooks adds, "The inference is clear, . . . the 'old fort,' so called, was Governor Cradock's house, built in 1634." Doubtless the Medford historian was, in his own mind, satisfied that his *inference* was correct; but was it? Unquestionably he did a remarkable work in writing his History of Medford, but to quote the words of his preface —

> The spirit of antiquarian research, now beginning to show itself, will lead to the discovery of many facts concerning the history of Medford, which are beyond my reach. These may soon render necessary a new history of the town; I hope it may be undertaken . . . .

After thirty years a reprint was made, with some additions, but it took fifty years for the "discovery of facts" to materialize, and "some of our writers have dared to contradict the elder historian and have produced the proof of their statements."* Those facts, just alluded to, when first read in the Society rooms, were not enthusiastically received, so contrary were they to the published statement of fifty years before, and we recall the statement of one at our side, "It's too bad; better have let it been as it was." It *was* a pleasant myth. "The oldest house in America," and such was the caption of an article in *Carpentry and Building*, published in New York,

* See REGISTER, Vol. VII, p. 53.

August, 1884. The wood-cut engravings that illustrate it show the front and easterly end of the house as it then was, an interior view of fireplace and window, and six detail drawings of construction, all "from sketches made on the spot by our own artist." These and the technical part of the text are highly interesting and instructive. The historical part follows in its detail Mr. Brooks' history. "A correspondent in Medford directed attention to it," and in another column we find the following: —

> Mr. C. B. Johnson, of Medford, Mass., writing with reference to the Cradock mansion, which we illustrate in this issue, says that when an apprentice, some thirty-five years ago, he helped reshingle the north side. He states that those portions of the shingles which were exposed to the weather had become worn to about $\frac{1}{16}$ inch in thickness.

Doubtless Mr. Johnson ("Clope," he was familiarly called) meant *thinness*, and from what we know of the durability of that old-time lumber it is not impossible that they were the *original* shingles.

Of the numerous book and paper accounts of this old house we have never found any "discovery of facts" Mr. Brooks' preface predicted that names it the Cradock house *prior* to Mr. Brooks' history, and *all* are repetition to a greater or less extent thereof, save those of Mr. Cushing, Judge Wait and Mr. Hooper in Vol. I, No. 4, and Vol. VII, No. 2, of the REGISTER, the "proofs submitted" before alluded to. And so we answer our own query relative to the birthplace and early home of the elder Dr. Tufts, confidently asserting it to be the "old two-story brick house in East Medford" (that because of Mr. Brooks' assumption, unproven statement and inference, has for fifty years been widely heralded as the "oldest house in America," "built by Mr. Cradock,") and assign its erection to the first Peter Tufts some fifteen or twenty years before his death in 1700, and first occupied by Captain Peter Tufts, perhaps before the death of his first wife, or his marriage to Mary (daughter of Rev. Seaborn Cotton), the mother of the first Dr. Simon Tufts.

THE HOME OF DOCTOR SIMON TUFTS, JR., AND HONORABLE TURELL TUFTS. BUILT ABOUT 1709. RAZED, 1867.

Relative to this house the *Transcript* has, until recently, issued in its *Strangers' Directory* the following: —

CRADOCK HOUSE. Riverside avenue, Medford. Built 1634, the first brick house in the colony, and the oldest house standing in North America. Every brick was imported from England. Named from Matthew Cradock, governor of the Massachusetts Company in New England.

Last April this ceased to appear, at the instance of the Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities. In one of its recent bulletins that society has called attention to this house, giving a view of it and also of another similar house after restoration, with which it compares it, and says —

The Peter Tufts house has been much modernized, but could be put back into its old condition with the help of a competent architect. It certainly deserves such treatment, for it is a building of unusual interest, having had apparently a triple casement window on each side of the front door.

It is interesting to note that prior to the "pure speculation of a young historical scholar" (as the Boston press styled Mr. Cushing's paper) the late James A. Hervey (see Vol. I, p. 70, REGISTER) in the hearing of the assembled Historical Society, said of Mr. Brooks,

Our excellent historian, whom I thoroughly love, is a little apt to lapse into rhapsody when he comes in sight of anything that redounds to the glory of Medford, and he can come to conclusion very satisfactory to himself, on very slight data.

The above was not relative to this house, but was of another relation, of which he said,

If we are to be historical, let us tell the truth.

At the time of Medford's two hundred and seventy-fifth anniversary there appeared a story in the *Boston Globe* relative to the markers placed on historic sites by the city's committee. This gave prominence to the "old theory" of the "Cradock house," reporting interviews with several residents of Medford, and quoting literally from Vol. II, p. 54 of the REGISTER —

The River road (a part of Riverside avenue) was referred to in a deed dated 1657 as "The Common Highway leading from the Mansion House (Wellington) unto Charlestown Commons and Meadford House."

In the REGISTER article, "Wellington" was supplied by Mr. Hooper to locate the mansion referred to in that deed, which is the old Blanchard-Bradbury-Wellington house still standing. But the writer in the *Globe* misrepresented the matter by saying —

The word Wellington is inserted by Mr. Hooper to show that the old brick house in Wellington was recognized as early as 1657 at least as the Cradock mansion above all others. Today however Mr. Hooper has forsaken the old idea entirely and bows down before the Cushing theory.

Possibly it might surprise the *Globe* writer were he to be told that the "Mansion House" was not of brick, was not the so-called Cradock mansion,* nor was it then within the bounds of Medford.

We may not *assume erection* of any house in 1634, and ignore possibility of non-existence in 1652, because the deed did not make these existing structures cognizable. Richard Russell (one of the Cradock heirs' grantees) in 1667 made "an old house" cognizable, but it was, as is proven, ninety rods away from this, and is long since gone. Its three hundred and fifty acres included the site of this. It is extremely improbable that he would have omitted mentioning this substantial structure if it existed, and been particular to specify an *old house* and *barn*. But there came a time when this house had a beginning of safely recorded history, viz.: when Peter Tufts made disposition of his brick house and specified the various rights of, and prohibitions upon, his heirs and successors in occupancy.

It is not our purpose to belittle this fine old structure, but to note the fallacy of its *extreme* antiquity and the invalid reasons cited therefor, which are still unproven.

* Medford seems to have had many mansions in those days, as Edward Collins mentions the mansion house of Golden Moore in his sale to Thomas Brooks in 1656.

A few old residents there are who remember the old house which was successively the home of the elder and younger Drs. Simon, and Turell Tufts, Esq., at Medford square. This, decrepit with age, was demolished in 1867 and succeeded by the present and soon to be removed building erected by Dr. Weymouth in 1872. When Dr. Weymouth at its completion addressed a company gathered there, he submitted the question of a name for the hall it contained, and suggested that of Tufts as appropriate. Adopted by acclamation, as Tufts hall it has ever been known.

## WILLIAM HENRY CUMMINGS, 1839–1915.

Amidst the feverish excitement of the present day there is brought home to the thoughtful mind the frailty of humanity; today we are here and tomorrow have stepped over the great divide into the realms of eternity. And it is well that there should be something more than mere passing mention made of the decease of one of the members of the Society who was for a long time an inhabitant and honored citizen of Medford, William Henry Cummings. Though not prominent in active affairs of the city, yet he was keenly alive to the interests and progress of city affairs.

Mr. Cummings was born in Boston, August 10, 1839, from which city his parents moved to New York state. When he was about fourteen years of age he came to Medford. At about nineteen he engaged in business in Cuba for a period of five years, returning to the United States near the close of the war. Within a short time he again went to Cuba and remained two or three years, returning to Medford, where in 1869 he was married to Miss Louisa M. B. Pierce, daughter of Deacon James Pierce, in the old First Baptist meeting house on Salem street.

For a period of about seven years Mr. Cummings was associated with the Florence Sewing Machine Company,

at Florence, Mass., and at the end of that engagement established his home in Medford and became connected with the Tufts Soda Fountain Company in 1878, serving as a trusted and efficient accountant for twenty years.

When the Tufts concern was merged with the trust Mr. Cummings was without employment, but, nothing daunted, he immediately took civil service examination and entered upon a new line of duty at the Navy Yard in Charlestown. For ten years he discharged with the same degree of fidelity and care his duties amid new surroundings, and, there also, the same congeniality and considerateness which had made him a most happy yokefellow in other employments was ever present; so much so, in fact, that it was with a great sense of personal loss that his fellow employees witnessed his failing physical powers and ultimately the laying aside of his pen.

Mr. Cummings was a graduate of our high school under his uncle, the late Charles Cummings, one of our most honored citizens. In 1858 Mr. Cummings united with the First Baptist church, and from that time until his decease was a constant attendant upon, and supporter of, its activities, serving for over fifteen years as clerk of the corporation. He was a member of the Medford Historical Society for about ten years. He had an unusual mind for retaining facts, and incidents in connection with the city were recalled as clearly as though they were of but recent occurrence, and coming, as he did, from an old family whose connections in the town and city were somewhat closely identified with its history, Mr. Cummings was able to disclose many interesting associations with the life of Medford. He is survived by three children, Misses Faith and Blanche and Mr. Louis W. Cummings, — an older daughter, Miss Grace Cummings, having died in 1895, and his wife in 1907.

— P. W. A.

Vol. XVIII.] [No. 4.

# Historical Register

OCTOBER, 1915

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**FORM OF BEQUEST.**

I give and bequeath to the Medford Historical Society, in the city of Medford, Mass., the sum of_____Dollars for the general use and purposes of said Society.

(Signed) _____


J. C. MILLER, JR., PRINTER, MEDFORD.

ALONG MYSTIC UPPER LAKE.

NEAR THE BOUNDARY.

# The Medford Historical Register

Vol. XVIII. OCTOBER, 1915. No. 4.

## MYTHS OF MEDFORD.

THERE is an old saying that "a lie will travel a mile while truth is getting its boots on." Leaving out that short ugly word, it is nevertheless true that some half-truths and far-fetched stories find ready credence, and that newspaper men who are given things to "cover," somehow manage to cover, but do little to *discover*.

We are not an "information pagoda," but some strange queries come to us at times, and some stranger assertions, the makers of which are at once in high dudgeon at our dissent or disapproval thereof. For instance, a daily paper of Boston asserts that the Middlesex canal passed close beside the railroad tracks at Tufts College station, and that the embankments were plainly visible — this six years since. Yes, embankments were then there in evidence, not of the canal, but of the works of the Massachusetts Brick Company of 1870.

Again, we have had pointed out to us the bed and towpath of the same canal, near the Medford almshouse, by people who showed water as conclusive evidence. The facts are, that the canal's course was a mile away; their "towpath" was the road-bed of the defunct Stoneham Branch Railroad, and water accumulated in a depression beside it every spring.

The old windmill tower on College avenue was said to be "*the entrance to an underground tunnel* by which fugitive slaves escaped across the Canadian border." *A long tunnel, that.*

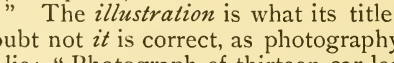
And this: Governor Brooks was born, lived and died in the old colonial mansion with broad verandas and massive pillars, then being restored, at the corner of High and Woburn streets, but in reality the governor was born in Charlestown, lived and died near Medford square, and

there are not, and never *were*, any verandas or pillars, massive or otherwise, about the house in question.

Again, there came to the editor of the REGISTER a clipping from a New York paper of a "Phantom Ship," said in the gruesome story to have sailed from Medford, Mass., never to return, but rather to appear in ghostly apparition, presaging dire calamity to superstitious mariners. The details of the story have escaped us, and the clipping has been mislaid. We recall that Medford, in this story, was on the sea-coast, with a harbor, which does not appeal to the credulity of Medford readers. The story evidently went the rounds of the "patent outsides," and we think also in the "plate matter" of a Medford, Mass., paper. That no one questioned its publication, suggests the ancient query, "Understandest thou what thou readest?"

MYTHICAL RUM.

Again, to the editor comes another clipping, this time from the missionary magazine of the Presbyterian Church, *The Amethyst*. It is a page-wide half-tone, over which is the query (in capitals), "What will this do for Foreign Missions?" The *illustration* is what its title indicates, and we doubt not *it* is correct, as photography does not ordinarily lie: "Photograph of thirteen car loads of rum on the track at Medford, Mass., consigned to Japan." Each car side is *covered* with a white placard, thus:




We had known, or at least had heard, that in former days rum had been made in Medford, and had also heard the time-worn story, possibly true, of missionaries and rum going on the same ship to Africa. We had also heard the names of the latest distillers, and that the *Medford product was the best ever made*, and further, that its excellent quality was enhanced by the *spring water* used in the process of making. But we were *not* prepared for such a gratuitous and unfavorable advertising of Old Medford (and by this we mean the city) as this widely circulated religious and missionary publication gives our

home city. So we draw the line and take exception to the words "Medford, Mass." being thus associated.

Photography does not lie, but we certainly *question the truth* of those printed words. The tracks at Medford are not extensive enough, nor have they the background of the picture, neither is there anywhere in Medford along the Southern Division line, any such background; and again, the semaphores in the half-tone are not of the style used in Medford.

A Medford paper, at the time of the removal of the distilling plant to another city, made the statement that it was to be used elsewhere. Can it be possible that the ancient virtues of the Medford plant, combined with some other "crystal spring" water, produce rum which, if rolled along the track at Medford, Mass., is fitted for export to Japan, or adds to its quality? We don't believe it. It is a myth, and as such we want none of it — nor yet otherwise.

### AN INSULAR BUT MYTHICAL DUELING GROUND.

The latest query the editor has received is about the insular dueling ground at Spot pond (and perhaps not in Medford bounds), and of the monument on the island. We have never seen this but once, on the occasion of a Sunday-school picnic, and were then told its story. On such occasions, stories told should be truthful. As we recollect it, the monument was about two and a half feet high, and had an inscription of a few words. Whether this was painted or cut in the wood or stone we cannot now say with surety, as the time is forty-one years agone. Recently the story has come to us in different form. There is a woman in the case; *i.e.*, some woman tells our new informant. She was evidently impressed with the horrible details she had heard — that in bygone days, when "gentlemen" settled their affairs of honor by the *code duello*, that there in that lonely spot, two men met in mortal combat, and at the distance of certain paces, with deadly weapons, sought each other's life as satisfaction for wounded honor, with the result "that Colonel Shute fell mortally wounded," and that his

friends, in their sorrow, erected the monument with the simple inscription, "Here Shute Fell." Truly a tragic affair must it have been, and sorrow in the extreme must have filled the hearts of all his family and friends. We will now tell the tale as we heard it years ago on the spot. In those old days there used to be a hotel called the Spot Pond House near the boundary line of Medford and Stoneham, at first respectable in character, and for the accommodation of travellers on the old Andover turnpike. It later, with the cessation of business and travel, degenerated into a place of questionable repute. The natural beauty of the locality attracted picnic parties to Spot Pond grove and to the island, and as usual to a public resort came some of lower character. One of these latter was composed of convivial spirits, and one among its number who was somewhat overloaded became overcome, and being too *full* for utterance, sank down for rest, or stumbled over some insignificant obstruction at that particular spot on the island. His boon companions thought it appropriate to mark the spot for future remembrance, and so set up the marker with the truthful inscription, "Here Shute Fell." Our own opinion is that "Colonel" Shute was a Kentucky colonel, and that his opponent in the duel the sympathetic lady told of was none other than the redoubtable Gen. John Barleycorn, hisdeadly weapon "a pocket pistol," and that "the grave on the island" is entirely mythical. The old tavern has gone, the Andover turnpike is no more. Instead is the electric railway that brings multitudes from the crowded city. Instead is the broad Fellsway, with its throng of automobiles and their occupants, coming to the "Beautiful lake in Middlesex Fells," of which was written —

> Fair as thy sister of the north
> Lesser "Smile of the Great Spirit" art thou
> Spread o'er the face of Mother Earth.
>
> *Vol. XII, p. 41.*

Whether the monument to the one who "fell" so long ago still remains, or has disappeared, enquiry of the public or park employees fails to reveal. But the *duel* story

is a myth. The *real* story of Shute's fall (whether colonel or not) has its lesson. Let us hope his successors of the present day do better than did he.

MYTHICAL PAGEANTRY.

Much has been said in recent months of the use of pageants in the teaching of local history. It may well be thus taught, but we still hold to the idea expressed by the late James A. Hervey in the words, "If we are to be historical, let us tell the truth." If it is too *bad* to tell, better be silent, for it is difficult to unlearn even pleasant fiction. Three questions are pertinent, however: —

1. Did John Winthrop purchase Ten-hills farm of the Indians? If so, does any record of such purchase exist?

2. Was there any mob demonstration against the Royall house, either before or after Sir Isaac's departure? If so, what proof of it?

3. Did Washington ever visit that house in person? If so, when, and what proof thereof?

By reference to the local press we find that the first two query subjects were thus portrayed in pageant by various actors. If this is correct, by all means let it be added to existing history, which heretofore has been silent thereabout.

It is a source of gratification that the Royall house has been preserved, and this because of the wide-spread interest taken in the matter by members of historical and patriotic societies. The old house guards its secrets well, but no one has done better in truthfully seeking its evolution than has Mr. Hooper,* former president of the Medford Historical Society. Four years since a poem read within its walls found place in the REGISTER. It contained one line savoring strongly of poetic license:

"The bricks shall be brought from over the sea"

to which the editorial dissent was then made in a foreword.

And now comes the *House Beautiful*, August, 1915, with superb illustrations of the house and pageant, and extended description of the former. We cannot quite understand how "the eave of the one-story lean-to" can

* See REGISTER, Vol. III, p. 137.

be "in the top story," which is the third in the house whose date of erection is given as 1631–2.

Medford people will certainly take exception to this — "A fire burned down . . . an extension on the end adjacent to the old building of brick and wood called the 'slave quarters,'" or that "it burned off the clapboards." A pretty theory is advanced relative to the kitchen stairway door, thus —

"Stairs are boxed in by a door, the top of which slants down from the hinge-side at a mildly acute angle because, in the seventeenth century, doors were often made by ships' carpenters who made them for houses as they made them for cabins of ships."

The prosy fact is, that the horizontal lines of these door *panels* are not mildly acute, as in "cabin doors." The settling of stairs and sagging of floors have necessitated a cutting off and a refitting of the door to its opening thus made angular.

And again, "the old carpenters' rule" for constructing staircases is named as applying to the front stairs of seven-inch risers and an eleven-inch tread —

"twice the rise, plus the tread, equals twenty-five inches cut on the string."

Some old carpenters that have long built stairs as well as houses would be glad of information as to this, and why *twice* the rise, or where twenty-five inches?

The above are technical matters. The "skeletons and ghosts" we will allow to rest and allude only to the assertion that —

"in the parlor . . . George Washington is said to have done his courting of some fair lady in one of the recessed windows. The tale is that he courted in vain."

As history records Washington as having only been in this vicinity at the siege of Boston, and again in 1789, when he visited Colonel and Dr. John Brooks, and as he had married Martha Custis years before, we think this a very unkind thrust against the revered memory of the Father of his Country to be scattered broadcast throughout the land from beneath the shadow of the gilded dome. Instead of technical and romantic myths, let us have attractive and historic truth, taught by narrative and pageant.

## MEDFORD'S SKY-SCRAPER — THE TUFTS TELEGRAPHIC TOWER.

TO keep pace with modern invention the American Radio and Research Corporation have recently erected on the easterly slope of College hill a towering framework of steel, three and one-half feet square, continuing the same size to a height of three hundred feet.

It is built of structural steel bolted together, braced diagonally in all directions, and rests in a concrete base a foot in thickness. This in turn rests upon insulating material on a concrete foundation several feet in the ground, the insulation and complete separation being needful for the satisfactory use and service of the tower.

From its top the antennæ are to communicate with a new building on the hill slope. The stability of this lofty and slender tower depends entirely upon the series of guys that are attached thereto at various intervals in its height, and which reach back to anchorages of concrete embedded in the ground. Much comment was expressed during its construction, relative to its permanent security, and some even wondered if "they owned up there." The college flag, of brown and blue, was one day displayed from its dizzy height. On another day, and at varying elevations, some acrobatic stunts were performed by some of the more daring workmen.

The most thrilling sensation, however, came on Sunday, September 26, last. Soon after noon a slight rain storm came on, accompanied by a westerly wind which soon became a gale, in fact, in its force, a sort of young hurricane. The lower portion of the structure was protected by the intervening hill-top and buildings, but the higher part and the topmost section, said to have been but temporarily secured, received the full impact of the gale. Yielding thereto, it toppled over and took all the lower portion with it. At 3.28 o'clock its seven tons of steel came down with a crash that was heard a long way off. In its fall it cut the numerous telegraph and telephone wires along Boston avenue and the railroad, its wreckage reaching down the deep cut and onto the steam railway tracks. An inward express train, at a forty-five

mile speed, was stopped by its engineer in the nick of time, but not without contact with the wreck, which was pushed some distance ere full stop was made. But for the fact of his train being a little late, a great disaster might have occurred, for had the falling mass struck the cars, it would have been a giant scythe, mowing down the passengers within. The ⅝-inch guy rods of the wrecked tower became entangled with the high-tension wires and the cables of the street railway and more or less charged with electricity, but fortunately no one was seriously injured. The police, firemen and railroad men were soon on the ground, and enough of the wreck removed to allow resumption of travel. An immense concourse of people soon gathered at the scene, and the wonder is that no resultant accident occurred.

At the present writing (a month later) the tower has been rebuilt in the same form of construction and at a greater height, is now complete, and is visible in all directions. Seen at a distance, the four steel bars at its corners, with the cross-bars and braces, become merged into one black *line* against the sky. It is said to be exceeded in height and power by but two radio stations in the country, and capable of communicating with Europe. It is the idea of a recent Tufts graduate, Harold J. Power, who is vice-president of the company who caused its erection.

We naturally associate electricity with light, heat and power (no pun is intended by this last word), but we can scarcely think that the late Mr. Charles Tufts, who suggested the college that should "put a light on that bleak hill," had any thought of electric light, heat, or the subtle energy utilized by the present lofty structure.

Since his time the city of Charlestown, in 1862, constructed a reservoir that for some years was regarded with some apprehension. Fear of flood has at length departed, and Medford and Somerville people have made homes in the shadow of its embankments.

The daily papers reported that during the reconstruction of the wireless tower one of the workmen, in his hurry for dinner, *slid* down three hundred feet of rope

*faster* than he expected, but checked by *extreme effort* his increasing momentum when but fifty feet from the ground. What might have happened, had he been unable to do so, we dislike to consider.

We may hope that the new tower is made secure from a recurrence of its early disaster, and trust that residents close by, and the multitudes that pass and repass daily by steam and trolley, may ever do so securely. The forces of nature, often freakish, are serious ones to be reckoned with. *Safety first* should be the rule of the engineer, and the lesson of Minot's Light should not be forgotten.

## MEDFORD MILE-STONES.

We have heard of but few such. Two were on the Andover turnpike, now Forest street and Fellsway. Who knows if any were placed on the Medford turnpike, now Mystic avenue?

We were recently called to view one of these, on the easterly side of the way near Spot Pond. It is of dark stone, like Medford granite, with one smooth face, and near its top is painted, in dark color, "M. 2 ms." Its location proved to be the second mile from Medford square.

Mr. Arthur Rice of Stoneham became interested in its preservation and offered to pay the expense of moving backward if needful. The park commissioners have decided that it may remain in its original position.

We are informed that the same gentleman secured the preservation of the fourth mile-post near Marble street in Stoneham, and will replace the third, which the Stoneham highwaymen (*i.e.*, the workmen on the highway), removed and built into a culvert some years since. It would be eminently fitting if the first mile-stone could be replaced by the Medford people, as it was removed some years since. It would be a reminder of the old highway, built by corporate investment, and maintained by tolls exacted from the travelling and business public, but which in later years became one of the most beautiful streets of the city, one that gives easy access to our beautiful Middlesex Fells.

## MEDFORD'S HOME FOR THE AGED.

THIS institution, which appeals strongly to the people, is now upon the Puffer estate at Winthrop square. Heretofore it has occupied a typical Medford dwelling, a view of which appears in its first printed report (1903). A better (half-tone) view from another direction is in reports of 1907–'12, and the latter shows its neighbor, the Abraham Touro house. (Probably this is the only view extant of that ancient and peculiar house, which was demolished some years since.) Information relative to this Medford Home is furnished by its correspondence clerk:

The Medford Home for Aged Men and Women was incorporated in December, 1901, and opened on January 29, 1902, in the house No. 66 South street (corner of Manning), which had been bought subject to mortgage, which has since been paid off. Seven persons entered at that time, which number was increased to nine the next year, filling all rooms. There is always a waiting list.

The Home is sustained by subscriptions, gifts, and entrance fees of $250 each, and by the proceeds of an annual fair. Gifts of real estate — a lot of land on the opposite corner of Manning and South streets, and a house and land on Winthrop street — have come to the Home, as also gifts of money and bequests. The Corporation has just purchased a larger house, the Puffer homestead, at the meeting of High street and Winchester road, upon which a mortgage must rest until its other real estate can be sold. The service of physicians, ministers and managers is given without charge.

The large barn that stands so near the house was erected by J. H. Norton for Mr. Puffer in 1871 or 1872, and before the improvements were made that resulted in the present building. The writer, on a recent pleasant (November) day went upon the grounds for the first time, and through the various rooms and cellar, and ascended the stairs to the cupola. Looking from the latter in all directions the thought came, "What would the original builder, the earliest occupants (and later, as well) say of the Medford of today spread there to their view?" And especially we thought of that Medford boy, whose home it was, and his writings, from which we shall later quote.

The house in its present form is well known to the present generation of Medford people as being in a fine location and with abundant grounds. For the past forty years it has been the home of a worthy Medford family,

though for a few recent years disused. It will now be known by the above caption. Were it styled "Aged People's Home," the adjective might refer to the building, as well as to its occupants, as the main portion is one of the oldest in the city.

This may seem strange to the casual observer, but there are still a goodly number of old residents who remember the large white house (resembling the Unitarian parsonage) which stood close to High street and nearer the brook, in former years known as the Swan house. This must not be mistaken for the Swan house that was moved from Governors avenue, as there were several of that name in the old days.

This house became the property of Samuel Swan, Jr., (b. 1750) who moved from Charlestown to Medford in 1790 and took up his residence therein. Mr. Swan was in his time a man of note, having served in the Revolution under Gen. Benjamin Lincoln, who afterward commanded the militia of Massachusetts at the time of the Shays rebellion. At that time Samuel Swan was quartermaster general with the rank of major, and in recognition of his service received the written thanks of Governor Bowdoin.

He was treasurer of the Malden Bridge Corporation, whose enterprise in building the bridge across Mystic river so exasperated the Medford parson as to cause him to write a vituperative letter thereabout. With his little (and only) daughter, then but three years old, Mr. Swan was the first to drive over the new bridge in a chaise. The distinction of being the first to pass over the bridge at its opening was eminently fitting. It was Mr. Swan who first suggested to Judge Russell the idea of a bridge at Penny ferry.

"Major Swan was paymaster of the Middlesex Canal Company, and went up to Wilmington every week with money to pay the workmen, running some risk of being robbed, as he was well known to carry money."

He had seven sons, one of whom became the "beloved physician" of Medford, Dr. Daniel Swan, and for whom the Swan school was named.

His youngest son, Caleb, was much interested in Medford's history, and distributed numbers of Mr. Brooks' volume among his friends on its publication. His own interleaved copy, after traversing the continent, has found place in our Historical Library — not a *resting* place, however, for its wealth of additions and its owner's criticisms are an illuminating sidelight on Medford history often sought.

Among the interleavings is a pen and ink drawing or "Map made by C. Swan July 24, 1863," which shows the course of Meeting-house brook through "salt marsh" on either side, with land of John Bishop at the south, while on the north side and between the brook and "County road," *i.e.*, High street, is shown "land of Sam[l] Swan," and at "head of tide" is "salt marsh, about 1 acre Francis Leathe to Patrick Roach Oct 18, 1816." The brook, in its lower reach, is designated as "Creek of salt water full every tide." Above "head of tide" is shown "stone wall," and the stream is there styled "brook," and a "bridge" is shown by dotted lines across "County road." Three "gates" are shown on the roadside, the one nearest the brook about midway on a "1 acre" lot next the Roach lot, on the other side of the brook is "land of John Wade." Another similar map styles it "Noah Johnson's land formerly John Wade's tanyard." From the middle "gate" is pencilled a "cart way" to the middle of the plot, and also in pencil is shown "boggy land." Toward the eastwardly adjoining "land of Dudley Hall" is pencilled "heavy crop of grass for 30 years." Almost opposite the easterly, or third gate, is shown the "House," which is the subject of our writing, and from which we have wandered a little. But a short distance eastward, and before the bend in High street, is shown another, marked "Furniss," which has been gone from that spot for the past forty-five years or more.

Incidentally we mention that the Wade tanyard is the Bean greenhouse location, and the "1 acre" east of the brook is the location of the second meeting-house and first schoolhouse of Medford, and through this mapped and still unoccupied land has been built the present Winthrop street."

One of these interleavings relates to his paternal home and was added as below in

NEW YORK, June 25, 1863.

About 1801 Mr Nathaniel Wells (who for many years assisted in mowing the grass in Medford, and who died in Aug. 1824, aged 92) said at Fathers house about 1801, that when he was a boy, he heard his Father say, that the frame of that house was of Oak, got out, framed, raised and built at a certain time, which was 112 years before the time Mr Wells was repeating it in 1801, which would make the time it was built 1689. Mr Wells thought the house was built by a Mr Richardson of Woburn.

If this be correct, and there can be little doubt thereof, this house, with its solid oak frame, must have been a century old when President Washington took his "health tour as far north as Portsmouth," and visited Medford in 1789, where he was entertained by Colonel Brooks at his home, only a few rods away.

Truly it is, with the modern addition of 1872 and its recent refitting, an aged "Home for the Aged" people. Its builders did their work well. They builded better than they knew.

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## A MEDFORD WRITER OF LONG AGO AND A MODERN MEDFORD SCHOOL.

TO the long and creditable list of Medford's authors given in "Literary Medford" (see Vol. XV., p. 1, REGISTER) by Mrs. Louise Peabody Sargent, must be added one that escaped her careful search, that of Francis Green. From an address at the Horace Mann School in Boston, November 10, 1897, on the occasion of the unveiling of a bronze tablet in his memory, the facts are gathered. The address was by the Honorable and Dr. Samuel A. Green of Boston. (See Medford Historical Society's accession 2445.) This Francis Green was of an old New England family, and born in Boston, August 21, 1742. His earlier education was had in Halifax, and next in Boston Latin School, and he was admitted to Harvard College in 1756. His father had previously procured for him an ensign's commission in the British army, with leave of absence for study at college. The war with France precluded this, and thus the young man,

then but fifteen years of age, joined his regiment at Halifax at the close of his freshman year. His leave of absence was not renewed, and his army service, which he seems to have taken up with zeal, took him to Canada and the West Indies. As an especial mark of favor he was permitted to take his A.B. degree in 1760 with his class.

In 1766, having become a lieutenant, he sold out his commission and entered into business in Boston. Three years later he married Susanna Green, who bore (by their fathers being brothers, and mothers sisters) the double relationship of cousin to him. There were five children, one of whom (a son) was deaf.

But Francis Green, perhaps because of his military experience, was a Loyalist, and as such went away to Halifax on the fleet at the evacuation of Boston in 1776. After a time he went to New York, and in 1780 to England, and returned to Nova Scotia in 1784.

While in England, and undoubtedly because of his son's affliction, he became interested in the welfare of the deaf, and wrote a treatise entitled "*Vox Oculis Subjecta*"; this in London, 1783. In June, 1797, he came to Medford and here resided for twelve years, until his death on April 21, 1809.

While living in Medford he prepared a sketch which he styled "Genealogical and Biographical Anecdotes of the Green Family . . . 1806." We do not learn that this was then published, as many years after, the original manuscript fell into the hands of Dr. Green of Groton, who copied it for his own use. It was by this circumstance that the authorship of "*Vox Oculis Subjecta*," which work had become well known in educative circles, became recognized. Prior to this, all that was known of it was that the author was an American of the name of Green. And so it came about that Dr. Samuel A. Green (whose memory in historic circles is ever green) published an abstract of the same, and later another paper, this in 1861, in which he claimed for Francis Green the distinction of being "the earliest advocate of the education of deaf mutes in America."

Beside the genealogical work above named, Francis Green, during his twelve years' residence in Medford, wrote much for the newspapers of his time over his own name and often over that of "*Philocophos*" (which latter was eminently appropriate of this work). We quote from the address alluded to, and from which we have compiled the foregoing: —

"He also made translations from the French on the same subject, which were likewise printed in the *Palladium*. These various productions from his pen served to call public attention to a matter that lay near and dear to his heart, and without doubt stimulated a sentiment which is today felt throughout the land. It seems almost a suggestion of fate that the 'Sarah Fuller Home for Little Children Who Cannot Hear' should have been established less than ten years ago in the neighborhood of Mr. Green's dwelling-place, in a city which, through his writings, is so full of early associations with this interesting class of boys and girls."

We find that sixteen years after his first marriage Francis Green married his second wife, Harriet Matthews, daughter of a mayor of New York (of the Revolution), and that she bore him six children (afterward Medford boys).

Very likely the eldest of Mr. Green's eleven children may have, ere his coming to Medford, established homes for themselves elsewhere, still, the coming of the younger must have materially added to the census list of the old town of less than one thousand people. As yet we have not learned where was his "dwelling-place." The allusion to it in the above quotation would lead us to infer that it was in the "West End," for it was there that the Sarah Fuller Home was instituted in 1887 or 1888. It was first housed in the cottage owned by Gilbert Lincoln, opposite his home on Canal street. This had a sizable lot, suitably fenced and sloping backward to the river, with large apple and smaller fruit trees and garden, making it a comfortable place for this peculiar home school. Miss Eliza L. Clark was the matron and Mrs. Anna Lyons the housekeeper, and the school began with but one pupil. After a time a smaller building was erected beside this for recreation purposes, and these continued to be used until in 1892, when the managers

purchased a larger and well-located house on Woburn street. This was the one erected in 1869 for his residence by Martin M. French, and had a stable adjoining, with ample grounds and trees surrounding it. The gilded copper dog that still as a weather-vane surmounts the stable cupola, is a reminder of the hunting and fishing trips taken by him and other Medford men.

By a succeeding owner, and by the home managers, this house has been somewhat improved and is still the home of the "Little Children Who Cannot Hear." It is noteworthy that it stands directly across the way from the site of the *first* West End schoolhouse, built in 1829, but it serves a far different method of teaching, and type of pupils. The teaching is of the same form as that by which Helen Kellar and Tommy Stringer acquired speech.

Miss Clark has been in charge during all the years until her death on February 23, 1915. Mrs. Lyons, a few years since, retired from service and is now happily settled in the Home for the Aged. Thus closed the record of their honorable, patient and faithful service for the help, education and betterment of many children so seriously handicapped by physical defect. Miss Henrietta Morrison is the present matron.

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## OUR OUTLOOK, OPTIMISTIC OR OTHERWISE.

THE Medford Historical Society is now completing its twentieth year of existence and work in one of the oldest towns (now a city) of the old Bay State. With the closing of the year another *season* has begun, and that under different circumstances and surroundings from any before. It is a natural sequence that the membership should have changed and that some, even many, of its earliest ones should have passed on, or have lapsed in membership. That their places have not been filled gives opportunity for pessimistic outlook — the *otherwise* of our caption. Other societies have suffered, and some have become inoperative, because of the same or similar causes. It has been even hinted that Medford's would thus become, and its present administration has been,

MISS MARY A. AYMAR
GIVING A DEAF CHILD THE FIRST LESSON IN ARTICULATION.

MYSTIC NARROWS.
(Boundary Line.)

and still is, confronted by peculiar circumstances and new conditions.

Except at the earliest and the annual meetings there has been no gathering of this society not addressed by some speaker, or some instructive and interesting paper read. These were (till two years since) announced by a folder, covering the entire season, and for several years a supplementary Saturday evening course was also provided and also thus announced in October. Our society has been enabled thus to do by the kindness and courtesy of friends and by members of other societies, as well as of our own, who take interest and pleasure in the work, and with but one exception (and that merely nominal) the service has been rendered gratuitously. We are pleased to say that some of our members have reciprocated such favors on occasion elsewhere. Recently, however, the practice of annual announcement has lapsed, and the work of the former committees has devolved largely upon the chairmen, and a detailed account of the same may be found elsewhere in this issue.

Circumstances have led the present chairman to procure no one to speak at two recent meetings, thus giving the assembled members opportunity to consider present conditions, and plan for future work and welfare. These circumstances were the sale of our former home, the consequent removal to the present quarters, and the discouragingly small attendance at the closing meeting of the former season.

This season, instead of the former folder or postal notice to each member, was sent a call for a "family gathering of the society to plan for future success." Under somewhat adverse circumstances the society met for the first time in our temporary quarters, and after the usual greetings and reading of records, listened to the "president's message," which he read, and which is embodied in the record of the meeting. This was a brief review of the past, and careful statement of the present conditionof the society's interests on all lines was plainly made. It opened the way for the members' debate in the hour that followed. Several propositions were made, all for

the purpose of reducing expense — all involving another removal, and one to build a new and permanent home. These were referred to a committee for careful consideration. This committee's record of meetings was submitted as a report to the November meeting of this society. Removal to proposed existing quarters seeming not entirely practical, and the lateness of the season and financial problems precluding the building plan, the record report was accepted and committee discharged. The entire evening was spent in spirited discussions of ways and means, resulting in a proposed amendment to the by-laws making increase in amount of annual dues, which will come up for consideration at the December meeting. The subscription price of the REGISTER was by vote raised to $1.50, *but no suggestion* of its *suspension* or *discontinuance* was made.

The president was by vote directed to appoint a committee of three to consider further the question of desirable quarters. Not only to such committee should be our outlook, but to every member it is, or should be, a matter of vital interest. In a city like Medford an Historical Society should number more than one hundred and fifty members. It should have permanent quarters worthy the name, should have sufficient revenue to support the same creditably, and under suitable supervision its library and collection should be at intervals available to the public, and especially to the school children and the people that are among us to stay and make Medford cosmopolitan. The "Ward Book," or list of poll-tax payers of our city is a revelation to those that read with an interest in the city's welfare. The founders of Medford, of New England, did well in their day, and the great West, in its expansion, feels their influence. It is no time now to relax any effort for the remembrance and preservation of New England ideals of religion, morals, virtues or patriotism, but rather to grasp every opportunity for civic betterment that lies at our doors. Make the outlook optimistic by increased interest in the society's objective and work, in attendance, in increased membership. Inquire into some of Medford's modern as

well as ancient history, present-day doings, and forecast the future a little. Boost Medford, it's a good *old* town, you live here, help it to be a good *new* city. Old Medford was good, make the new Medford better by various efforts, and just now by this society, just coming of age (twenty-first year), with one hundred new members — live ones — that will find it "cheaper to move than pay rent." With no disrespect to our present temporary quarters — the best available for the time — resolve that the *next removal* be to quarters of our own, safe, convenient and attractive.

## THE SOCIETY'S MEETINGS, SEASON 1914–1915.

ON October 19 the opening meeting of the season was held. The paper of the evening, "In the Beginning of the Age of Steam," was one prepared some ten years before, but thus presented for the first time to fill an emergency gap in the program. This was by Moses W. Mann, who gave it as the "Cruise of the Merrimack." An abstract of this paper was then in press for the REGISTER under that title.

Rosewell B. Lawrence, Esq., one of our vice-presidents, on November 16 entertained the society (as he has previously done) with an account of his vacation trip, this time to the "Hawaiian Islands." Mr. Lawrence's interesting story was made the more vivid by numerous views, most of which were secured by his own camera and shown by Mr. Brayton.

On December 21 another of our members, Mrs. Augusta Brigham, favored us with her story of "Ten Soldier Brothers in the Revolution," an uncommon occurrence, and the story most interestingly told.

At the January, or annual, meeting the reports were made and election of officers took place, prior to which former president John H. Hooper read the highly interesting account of A. K. Hathaway, "An Old Medford Schoolmaster," who was known to the older members of the society.

The speaker on February 15 was Mr. George G. Wolkins of the Old South Historical Association, and his

subject "The Old South Meeting-house." The speaker dealt with the earlier history of the church more particularly; also at less extent, with the meetinghouse, and the means by which it has been preserved. The same was replete with interest, and a goodly number were present.

March 15 was "Old Home Evening." Our townsman, Mr. George W. Hersey, with the assistance of Mr. Brayton, gave us a personally conducted tour through Medford, and brought out of his camera treasures, things new and old, the lakes, the Fells, Medford's old houses, streets and people, and all so true to detail, life and nature. We *let George do it*, for he is master of his art.

April 19, Patriots' Day, was noticed by a program of patriotic readings, and music by young ladies of the high school. The president displayed the old flag taken at Lexington, and spoke of the events of April 19 of '75 and '61, and Medford's part in them; also of the legislative enactment of the 19th as Patriots' Day, and at intervals introduced the Misses Gladys Falt, Mildred Grimes and Mary Rowan, who read "Paul Revere's Ride," "Hang out the Lanterns," and a poem on Patriots' Day by some Medford author (unknown) on occasion of its first observance. Miss Myrtle May Meloon entertained the company with selections on the mandolin, and also played the ancient piano, made in London over a century ago, closing with America. This entertainment, "Made Mostly by Medford Maidens," was favored by the largest attendance of the season.

On May 17 Rev. Anson Titus of Somerville gave a most interesting address on "The Social and Economic Conditions Attending the Years Following the American Revolution." Those present found it "the best wine at the last of the feast," and were sorry for the absent ones. Some untoward circumstances caused a small attendance, the least of the season (perhaps the least ever known). Ten days later the society vacated its rooms, which are now but a memory.

## "WHAT MEAN THESE STONES?"

Joshua 4:21.

A few years since, a bright, observing Medford schoolboy came to the writer with this question, "Mr. ——, what is that stone post on —— street, near the brook, for?" adding, "my teacher said that he didn't know, but probably you could tell me."

The stone in question is one of the markers of "grade lines" established by order of selectmen May 28, 1889, in accordance with general laws of 1888, and which, to the number of twenty-two, may be seen at the roadsides, near the crossing of all brooks and the river. They are (mainly) of the dark Medford granite of Pasture hill, about a foot square, and of varying heights. A square space is roughly dressed across the roadside face and indented thus, $\frac{G}{19 \div 6}$, or otherwise, as location needs. Probably the "grade act" had never come under the schoolmaster's notice, and there are others equally excusable.

The schoolboy's query shows that he used his eyes and tongue to some purpose, and suggests the ancient one we have above quoted. We were not licensed to preach, but gave the schoolboy the information he sought (much to his gratification), and wish there were more like him.

In their annual report (1890) the selectmen said,

> A grade of thirteen feet above mean low water was decided upon by the selectmen under the law, for the established grade, below which no cellar or basement-cellar of any building shall be constructed, used or occupied, except by license, for storage, or business purposes.

Then followed a list of twenty-two grade marks in various localities of "cross cut in stone and red chalked," giving figures thus, "19, 09. In feet and inches 19′, 1″," or otherwise, as might be. Some of these red-chalked cross cuts (X) were in abutments of bridges, "natural rock," "man-hole curb," "iron hydrant," and the like, and in some cases cannot now be found because of alterations made. Ere long granite markers of uniform shape were substituted for these which were difficult to find.

## MEDFORD'S METES AND BOUNDS.

Walk about Zion, and go round about her . . . mark ye well her bulwarks . . . that ye may tell it to the generation following.
*Psalm 48: 12-13.*

The public statutes require that city and town officers do as above once in every five years, to make sure that the boundary lines are maintained and the monuments in suitable condition and in their proper places. This is known as "Perambulation of Town Lines." We understand that under our city government some aldermen are accompanied by the city engineer or his representative. We may not think that this duty is strictly *ambulatory*, or that the exact or all the boundary line is *walked* over. It would be impracticable thus to do, unless, indeed, our mayor adds an *aeroplane* to the equipment of the highway department. The Medford of today is much larger than was Governor Cradock's farm, which lay north of the river and "a mile backward in all places."

The latest map of Medford, if cut by its outlines from one of the county, would reveal a singular shape, reminding one of a broody, bristling hen. The hen's beak is in the water where Malden river joins the Mystic, the broad tail reaches Stoneham, and the sheltering wing covers the parkway and dips into the waters of Mystic lake, and this even though the ordinary hen is not aquatic in her habits.

Around this curiously shaped boundary line, at its corners, are set the monuments of granite that, numbered and marked with the initials of Medford and her neighbors, form the subject of our sketch. In 1888 a careful survey of the lines was made by three commissioners, and substantial maps, descriptions and historic facts made into the *Boundaries of Medford*, one of which is in the city clerk's office. The official photographer also was on the ground, and two pages contain thirty half-tone views of these monuments. All but one were taken in that year and form a highly interesting exhibit, especially after the changes that twenty-seven years have wrought. Corner number one is at the top of Winter hill, inside the front fence of Mr. Barber's grounds, is less than a

foot high, with a shade tree beside it. The view is taken looking into the front yard, which is in Somerville, while the rear is in Medford and the house in both cities. Just now, in this extreme corner of Medford, are being built some twenty houses of modern type. The last noted *invasion* of this spot was by the Hessian prisoners after their weary march from Saratoga in 1777. Number two is 3,550 feet westward, and looking north the Littlefield lumber shed forms a background in its view. Number three is 510 feet away beside a tree (a child's box cart, evidently home-made, shows in the view), and in the distance a dwelling-house, recognizable as now the parochial residence of St. Clement's church. Four hundred and sixty-five feet further is number four, and the view shows Warner street in Somerville, the continuation of Medford's Harvard street. Going 350 feet number five is shown among some small trees on the "east side of a cart path."

Four of these are described as being in the Charles Tufts estate, but times have changed, as the numerous houses in both cities, and Bromfield, Pearson and Bristol roads show. Some dozen feet into Pearson road may now be found this last monument, cut smooth with the pavement. Eight hundred and seven feet away, looking north, is number six, with the brick station of the railway (called Tufts College) and the venerable oak, nobody knows how old.

To reach number seven will require a walk up hill 1,164 feet. Here Goddard chapel, with its lofty Lombardic tower, will be seen to the northwest, 165 feet away. The next line is short, but 80 feet, and here to the west, among some trees, is number eight. Number nine is described as "with broken top." It is viewed northwesterly, and in the distance are the gymnasium and another college building. Does this account for the breakage, even though 684 feet away from the chapel? One hundred and twenty-eight feet at another right angle and we see number ten (with the M very black), and the campus and three houses along Professors row.

Turn squarely again and 691 feet will bring one to

number eleven, which is beside Somerville's Curtis street. Here the view includes a stone wall and bushes, "and a rough tapering monument." Three hundred and seventy-eight feet along the wall and street, and number twelve is reached. This view, also, is stone wall and bushes, but included is the towering embankment of the reservoir built by the city of Charlestown. A water-barrel used to be beside the road, fed from a spring in the hillside and not, as many thought, and quite naturally, from the reservoir. This spring was encountered at an early stage of the work in 1862, and record of same made at the time by the engineers in charge.

Sêven hundred and sixteen feet from this last is number thirteen, and whether unlucky or not is "back of Samuel Teele's barn." Two hundred and eighty-five feet further, after turning squarely again, looking west one sees number fourteen. One tree and four houses show in the picture. Today there is the recently built Somerville extension of Adams street, phenomenal in its growth. Turn squarely again and 724 feet away is a "tall granite post with dressed top," which is number fifteen. The picture shows a tree and but little else; but it isn't lonesome *now*. Another square turn to right, 648 feet alongside an old rangeway, and number sixteen is found, with the sign "North street" to keep it company.

Eight hundred and seventy-seven feet from this is number seventeen, and 500 feet away, looking north, is seen the tall chimney and the roof of the pumping station now for years disused. But to follow this line might require rubber boots, as the ground is very moist, in fact the engineer referred to styled it then "a swamp." Another sharper turn right and 1,207 feet will reach number eighteen, which is "215 feet distant from the center of the westerly track of the railroad." This view shows (northward) the framework of shed of the Colonial Chemical Co., a carpenter's saw bench and one rail of the spur track from the railway whose high embankment looms up in the distance. This monument was not a corner, but bore upon it a "witness mark," as the boundary line continued straight on to an unmarked point in the middle

of the river beyond the railroad, and which was number nineteen. Incidentally we note that the Middlesex canal crossed this line very closely at this point. But other things than the canal have disappeared. The "irregular granite with flaring top, near the east corner of a small building," has been cut off smooth with the concreted floor of the big brick factory, recently built over it, and the drill-hole in its top marks the exact boundary.

In our perambulation we have covered about two and a half miles and arrived at the end of the Somerville *appendix*, having gone up hill and down dale, sometimes forward, sometimes backward. Just now we may hear the fire-alarm whistle over our heads, perhaps the hoodoo sixty-one.

In this small part (only about a quarter) of Medford's boundary are nearly two-thirds of the corner bounds. Why this crooked line? and why this Somerville *appendix* that Medford so nearly encloses? The reason is that long ago Charlestown people had some cows, and this hill territory outside Governor Winthrop's farm was their "cow commons" or pasture land, as a mile back from the river northward was "Charlestown wood lots." Well does the *Boundaries of Medford* say, "Originally Medford was entirely surrounded by Charlestown." When in 1765 Medford wanted more territory (and got it) the line of boundary followed the lines of the cow pastures over and around the hill, thus keeping some of the Charlestown lots along the river, forming the *appendix* that forty years ago began to be troublesome by the incoming of the chemical works (now gone). There is need of legislative surgery for Medford's relief, though a partial and considerable relief has come by the Metropolitan parkway's taking therein. We fancy some of those Charlestown people had some wood or marsh grass on their holdings, and naturally preferred to stay in Charlestown bounds, and so were not annexed, and nearly a century later their territory became Somerville.

One thing our perambulation has not revealed — the wigwam of Sagamore John that Governor Winthrop visited, but it was close by. Perhaps somebody's new house building may find trace of it.

We have heard recent enquiry about corner nineteen. Only the engineers can now determine it, but it is eighty-five feet from the railway track. The river has been moved, and the "tip end" of the appendix lies northeast of the railway under the parkway and beside it.

From corner nineteen the boundary follows the "thread of the river" to an unmarked point where Menotomy river (*alias* Alewife brook) joined it, which is some distance above the present stream. Here is the corner of Medford, Somerville and Arlington. It would be a pleasant excursion up this boundary. We took it last summer in company with nearly forty people in one boat, as far as Mystic dam. "Through the narrows" the line runs to "an unmarked point in Mystic (upper) pond." This is also an unmarked point, the corners of Medford, Arlington and Winchester. On the shore, 15 feet from the water's edge and 1,094 feet from that unmarked point, is number twenty. The view shows the curve of the Mystic Valley parkway, a slim, tapering cedar, and the stone monument. This, like number eighteen, is a "line stone," and not a corner, and has the "witness mark," as the line passes through it 5,620 feet to number twenty-one. Also in its course are the "road stones" on Grove and Winthrop streets, which latter becomes Main street in Winchester.

We are now in the woods near Whitmore brook, and the pictures are sylvan views. On our way we will pause and see the red cedar growing from the top of a massive boulder not far from the line. See REGISTER, Vol. XIV, p. 14.

We will turn northward, now. Three thousand eight hundred and eighty-one feet will take us to number twenty-two, and as we look southward we shall see W on the stone, as the photographer had to get his view from the Winchester side. Turning just a little, 1,336 feet brings us to number twenty-three. Possibly there was some "hoodoo" about this number, as the photographer did not get his view till a year later (1889) when he secured a woodland view of "an iron 4 feet high and $1\frac{3}{8}$ inches square, standing on a ledge about 1,500 feet away from Turkey swamp dam."

From this point it is 1,818 feet to number twenty-four, the extreme corner of the city next Stoneham. Turning squarely and passing across middle reservoir, 4,261 feet brings us to number twenty-five. There *was* a large rock of four feet on the side next and west of Forest street, with a drill hole between S and M on its top. This was near Porter's cove of Spot pond. Number twenty-six is 2,786 feet farther on in nearly the same direction, is near Fulton street, is a tall stone with wedge-shaped top among denuded trees. Two thousand six hundred and twenty-five feet, still in similar direction, reaches number twenty-seven, which is a tall monument with a pile of loose rocks about it, and near a pile of stones, or cairn. The Metropolitan park map styles this spot "Cairn hill," and gives the elevation as 303 feet, the highest elevation in Medford.

From corner twenty-seven the boundary runs southward by Malden 7,257 feet to number twenty-eight, which *was* a rough granite block with M in red paint, but the view shows the same in the retaining wall beside Salem street, with an M on either end, and Mr. Jacob's houses on the slope above.

Two thousand six hundred and fifty-seven feet in a line swinging eastward from the former, to number twenty-nine in the loam space of the Fellsway, formerly called "Creek head," thence is a water route "along the thread of Little creek," or "Nowell's creek," to number thirty. Here Highland avenue of Malden ends and Middlesex avenue of Medford begins. The boundary line continues through a "line stone" with "witness mark," along Malden river to number thirty-two, an unmarked point at the corners of Everett, Malden and Medford. Number thirty-three is also an unmarked point, the corners of Everett, Medford and Somerville, at the junction of the Malden with Mystic river. After following the serpentine Mystic westerly to a point in line with the monuments "Medford Somerville 1" and "Medford Somerville 3," the line runs 2,088 feet westerly by Somerville to the point begun at, on the top of Winter hill. This line is through a witness mark on a "line stone"

beside Mystic avenue, marked "M. S. city line," 250 feet from corner thirty-four, and also through another "ancient line stone" on the site of the old Middlesex canal.

Beside these corner monuments there are "road stones" on east of Main and east of Medford streets, east of College and northeast of Boston avenues, east of Grove, west of Winthrop, and east of Myrtle streets at the city boundary. There is also a "line stone" between corners twenty-seven and twenty-eight, distant 1,152 feet from twenty-seven.

These two pages of the *Boundaries*, containing thirty half-tones, are very interesting, varying from woodland scenes to exceptionally fine views of Goddard chapel and the railway station. Were photographs taken today, in a few instances the change would be marked by the building development. In two instances (five and twenty-five) a blue print of the survey and a new monument is inserted in the *Boundaries*. If we have "*walked* about" Medford or gone "round about her" by boat or air craft, we have travelled about nine miles by land and about six miles by water or air; but this is not an "air line," as the "thread of Nowell's creek" and Mystic river is crooked indeed. We have looked across the boundary into the pleasant homes of our neighboring cities, been close to the temples of religion and halls of learning, crossed the railways with their crowded cars and hurrying multitudes, gone under the highways and climbed over the dam at the "Narrows." We have sailed over the upper as well as the lower lakes, and climbing the hillside, passed through the Brooks estate, and enjoyed the beautiful view across the lake to "Morning-side." We have overlooked the silent city of Oak Grove and passed through the attractive solitude of the Fells. Doubtless we have enjoyed our perambulation.

Town officers in days gone by have had similar and other experiences. One of them comes to us with the story of setting a road stone. In drawing the line between monuments it was found that two houses were "over the line," and not in Medford. The resident in one was highly irate, and regarded the Medford select-

man as the cause thereof, and assailed him with eggs. We asked him if there was any *egg-nog* in it, and the reply was, "Medford selectmen in the old days never had any junkets." Tell this "to the generation following."

## OLD LANDMARKS GONE.

WITH the demolition of the old Withington bakery, the dismantling of the Historical Society's former home, and the alteration of half the tenement-block known as *Doctors' Row* for business purposes, the view of Salem street from Medford square is materially changed. The glass and stucco front of the latter, the marble, and tapestry brick of the theatre building, and the stucco walls that hide the little that was left at Ashland street, are in marked contrast to the view in May last. We were told that the old-time architecture would be there retained, at least in the upper stories, and so stated in the June REGISTER. But we look in vain therefor. The legend is,

BVILT, 1802; REBVILT, 1915

but what the craft shown in the front panel may be — ark, viking ship or hydroplane — we are waiting to learn.

. . . . . .

If Major Jonathan Wade could drop into his old domicile today he might enjoy an uninterrupted view of the market-place, as the City Hall annex, *alias* Simpson tavern, *alias* Thomas Seccomb house, the three-story brick house, and the more modern Tufts hall building, have all been razed. But not for long the major's outlook, as a deep cellar has been excavated and built in their places, and a modern mercantile building is in process of erection thereon. We regret that it was necessary to remove the big horse-chestnut tree to which the birds resorted, but it was unavoidable.

The excavation of the cellar failed to reveal the treacherous quicksand, said to underlie the spot. But the various alterations and public improvements, notably the sewerage system, have drained the "duck pond" men-

tioned a century ago, and improved conditions here as elsewhere.

. . . . . .

Another change should be noted, the demolition of the old gambrel-roofed house on Main, corner of Emerson street. Beside this was once the home of Dr. Luther Stearns, (father of Major George L. Stearns), and here he had his noted "academy" for boys a century and more ago. Sectional and factional spirit ran high in those days, carried even into the sports of the schoolboys. The disastrous effect of a snowball fight at the town school raised the siege of a snow fort here. One had been built and date set for its storming by the *Fag-enders*. Its defenders were *Maggots*, but Dr. Stearns was an autocrat whose prohibiting word was law, and had to be obeyed. See REGISTER, Vol. XI, p. 47.

For years this old house has been falling into decay, and, uninhabitable, has been an eyesore, inviting lawless attempts at its destruction by fire.

A lesson may be learned from its construction, *i.e.*, the brick filling of its walls that has resisted the numerous incendiaries that have called the alarm of sixty-one so often. Incidentally we wonder how the modern construction of lath, paper, and plaster will stand fire test.

We have heard no lament of its passing, and there are doubtless others that might well be removed and something desirable and durable take their places. An instance of this is the removal of Dr. Gahan's house on Washington street, demolition of another, and the erection of a modern dwelling of concrete construction on the former site. As a matter of historic fact, 1915 marks the erection of this, the Medford theatre and the *Medford Messenger* buildings, the material therefor dug largely from the ground where they have been built. Medford should welcome a method of construction that reduces the fire risk, and in time proves more economical to its citizens.

## MEDFORD MERRYMAKINGS OF A CENTURY AGO.

1815 — *Nahant Parties.* At this time, when only a few persons resided at Nahant, it was the custom for families in Medford to join in a party to that beautiful promontory. From ten to twenty chaises would start together, and reaching Mr. Breed's, the ladies and gentlemen, girls and boys, would proceed to fishing from the rocks and boats. Each one wore the commonest clothes, and the day was spent in all sorts of sports. A fish dinner was an agreed part of the fare, and a supper at the Lynn hotel closed the eating of the day. The party rode home by moonlight, and by ten o'clock were tired enough to go to bed.

Yes, people worked hard to have a good time then, even as now, and perhaps enjoyed it more. At the above date Charles Brooks was in his college junior year, and doubtless forty years later, when, after a busy life, he wrote the History of Medford from which we quote, remembered with pleasure the summer outings.

Why cannot some Medford author prepare a pageant scene of this, one true to the facts? There are enough of the old houses of High and Salem streets left (even though the Third Meeting-house, Governor Brooks', the Seccomb and Tufts houses are gone) to give a realistic setting. Be sure and have Mr. Brooks and his box chaise start from under the great sycamores at his father's door — same old place — and ride down Marm Simonds' hill. Have Parson Osgood and his daughters come out from the parsonage and go too, and all the others, not forgetting Lydia Maria Francis — she was thirteen and was not a *Child* then.

We remember going to a Nahant party with some Medford (and other) people in 1860, but they took the cars at West Medford and "Medford Steps," and went on steamer *Nelly Baker*, which was afterward sold to the government in war time. We had a fish dinner, too, and our first dip in salt water.

Mr. Brooks, when at Hingham in 1819 or '20, was interested in the first steamboats in Boston harbor. His "Nahant parties" were earlier. We wish he had told more about them, but here is a suggestion for some Medford festival.

## AT THE YEAR'S END.

WITH this issue the REGISTER completes its eighteenth volume. We have to beg the pardon of our subscribers for the lateness of its issues, and thank them for their forbearance. We have labored under many difficulties during the past year, but have striven to make each issue a distinctively *Medford* production. As the addresses at the Society's meetings during the past two years have yielded little matter for our pages, the editorial labors have increased. This issue is therefore an Editorial number. We would be pleased to have the next a Contributors'.

The kindly comments we have received during our eight years' incumbency have been very encouraging, and the assistance of contributors to the fund of Medford history very material. Of these latter we say, "May their 'tribe increase.'"

There is a dearth of recorded history of Medford from 1840 to '70, incidents of war time, and matters the revision of Brooks' history failed to notice. Send them to us.

We have alluded on another page to the action of the Society relative to the REGISTER of the future. This increase of subscription price is absolutely necessary, as during its entire history its publication has been at a deficit that in some way had to be met from the treasury. Increased expenses in the management of the Society preclude such payment further, and the consensus of opinion is, that the publication must continue. Notice of the advance was immediately sent to all subscribers, and the renewal coupons already received indicate their interest in our work. A little earnest effort on the part of all our members just now will put the REGISTER on a secure business foundation and be an encouragement to the contributors to its pages to do more and better work (if that be possible) in the future. And so, as a labor of love for the Society and our home city, we send out this number, with greeting and best wishes for the new year, 1916.

## MEDFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY.

### Twentieth Year, 1915-1916.

THIRD MONDAY EVENING OF EACH MONTH AT 8 O'CLOCK.

October 18. The President's Message and Discussion. Light Refreshments.

November 15. Report of Committee and Consideration of Ways and Means.

December 20. "A Boy's Recollections of the Days Before the Civil War." Mr. Charles F. Read, Clerk of Bostonian Society.

January 17. Annual Meeting. Reports, and Election of Officers.

February 21. To be announced.

March 20. "The Ornithology of Middlesex Fells." Gordon Boit Wellman, Esq., Malden.

April 17. "The West Medford Baptist Church." Frank Woods Lovering, A.B.

May 15. "The American High School." James D. Howlett, A.B., Principal of Medford High School.

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